SAN FRANCISCO THEATRE RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

MONOGRAPHS:

STEPHEN G. BASSETT

JOSEPH A. [illegible]

VOLUME ONE

FIRST SERIES

Abstract from
WPA Project 8386
O.P. 465-03-286

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
1939

[illegible] TO BE [illegible] UNDER THIS SERIES - BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL

VOLUME I.

[illegible] TO THE SERIES
[illegible]:
[illegible]
[illegible]

VOLUME II.

[illegible]:
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

VOLUME III.

[illegible]:
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VOLUME IV.

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VOLUME V.

[illegible]
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[illegible] THEATRES

San Francisco Theatre Research

Vol. 1. Second Edition

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

MONOGRAPHS

I: STEPHEN C. MASSETT: Singer, Writer, Showman.

II: JOSEPH A. ROWE: Pioneer Circus Manager.

First Impression, May 1938

Second Impression, Feb. 1939

Lawrence Estavan, Editor. San Francisco.

Monographs I and II from Theatre Research

This edition produced by W.P.A. Project 10677, O.P. 665-08-3-167

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INTRODUCTION

There is no longer any reason to apologize for research, statistical and literary productions of technical and professional workers employed at security wages by the Works Progress Administration. To all who have had an opportunity to inspect such work it is apparent that a lasting service has been rendered to widening communities of interest throughout the United States. These workers might otherwise remain unemployed or would be assigned work for which they are not qualified or suited. The value of research work under the WPA has established itself alongside of the equally vital but more obvious accomplishments in the public construction field.

In the field of research and writing, with which we are here primarily concerned, WPA workers have won widespread recognition and critical acclaim from qualified and unbiased sources. The series of monographs in the cultural fields, which began with the twenty-one volumes on San Francisco Art and Artists published last year, is no novelty as a production subsidized by WPA funds. From hundreds of libraries, newspapers and individuals throughout the country, came thankful and congratulatory letters acknowledging this voluminous work as one of the most important and permanently valuable reference works in this field.

This Theatre Research volume (as well as the dozen or more planned to follow it in the course of this year) aims

to do for the art of the theatre in San Francisco what its predecessor did for the graphic and plastic arts. In fact, because of the extent, variety and relative importance of the theatre in San Francisco, it intends to do more: for while Art Research covered its subject from a biographical angle primarily, San Francisco Theatre Research has operating plans not only for extensive biographical treatment but also for detailed coverage of period history and significant phases and movements in the history of the drama and of opera.

The specific plan for this undertaking was evolved jointly by Dr. James E. Sharp, WPA Coordinator of Research and Statistical Projects and Lawrence Estavan, Project Supervisor. The advice of authorities on the subject was sought both in the practical world of the theatre and in the academic world of universities and colleges. Its purpose, briefly, is to gather research data and write a series of monographs on the theatre and its people in San Francisco from 1849 to the present day.

It is generally admitted that the subject of the theatre in San Francisco is a relatively important one aside from its value as a dramatic and colorful story. Its tradition is a notably long and important one, since much of significance in the American Theatre had its beginnings in San Francisco, and this city cradled many of the greatest stars in American theatrical history. If we except the Spanish period, which in its "theatre" was a time chiefly of fiestas,

balls, bull and bear fights, cock fights and rodeos, we find that San Francisco emerged Minerva-like as an important theatre city primarily due to the sudden and unprecedented effect of the Gold Rush. The argonauts and miners wanted to be entertained and could pay for it. Many preferred the saloon and gambling hall, but the theatre did not languish because of this, and in fact, developed in some instances directly out of the saloons and beer halls where a bawdy but earthy variety entertainment grew up.

Furthermore, no definitive or reference history of the San Francisco theatre has been compiled. Constance Rourke dealt briefly with the early period in her book Troupers of the Gold Coast (1928) assembling it around a biography of Lotta Crabtree; the Federal Theatre's research department, according to recent information, will probably bring out two volumes: (1) Annals of the San Francisco Stage (1850-1885) and (2) a monograph on the Chinese Theatre in San Francisco. Now out of print is a small monograph San Francisco Theatre of the Gold Rush Decade, prepared on a California SERA project in 1934.

The operating plans of the San Francisco Theatre Research series cover more intensively the entire field. Besides presenting an entertaining and absorbing narrative in itself, the monographs, it is expected, will be of special interest to students and historians, biographers and theatre lovers. The sources of these monographs are the exact day by day references contained in living history, the photograph, the scrapbook,

the files of old newspapers and magazines and in personal memoirs and interviews with old time theatrical people.

In this series of monographs will be traced the lives of the theatre's stellar figures, the story of foreign theatres, the Little Theatre movement, the history of burlesque, the history of theatre buildings, music halls and beer gardens; the whole story of opera, period costumes in the theatre, and the development of stagecraft.

As the monographs are published there will be brought out the importance of the early stage in San Francisco as a medium of communication before the days of the rail, the telephone and radio. The San Francisco theatre developed an interesting and democratic rapport between the actors and their audience. For it is significant that though early theatre-goers relished such diverse productions as the plays of Shakespeare and the stilted melodrama of the Bulwers and Bouciccaults, they did not relish genteel productions. Furthermore early San Francisco did not suffer from the crippling influence of Puritanism and censorship that beset the infant American theatre on the Atlantic seaboard.

The two biographies in the present volume might, in a sense, be considered as a prologue to the history of the legitimate stage in San Francisco, as the personalities treated -- Stephen C. Massett and Joseph Andrew Rowe -- one an entertainer and the other a circus man, represent the city's first self-conscious efforts to evolve a stage.

Although the entire research and stenographic staff on the project assisted in the preparation of these monographs at various stages in production, particular credit for rewriting should be given to Mr. Alan Harrison for his work on the Massett monograph, to Mr. Eddie Shimano for his work on the Rowe monograph, to Mr. William K. Noe and Mrs. Elleanore Staschen for production and proof-reading; and to Mr. Jack Wilson for his research direction.

April 25, 1938.

Lawrence Estavan
Project Supervisor

S T E P H E N C. M A S S E T T

1820 - 1898

Autographed Photo from the Collection of Mr. Donn Huberty

STEPHEN C. MASSETT

In San Francisco during the fabulous late forties there stood on the waterfront, among other crazy buildings, a wooden-frame shanty which housed Colonel J. D. Stevenson's land office. Across its surface a sign in large letters proclaimed: "Agency For Lots In New York Of The Pacific." Underneath was the Colonel's name and below that, recently added, the name Stephen C. Massett, Notary Public and Commissioner of Deeds. The proclamation was fantastic; nowhere in California could there be found a tract of land that even remotely justified it. However, inside the office there appeared a large map, showing subdivisions of the property - priced at $250 per lot. But proof of its whereabouts, or even its existence, there was none save what came from the Colonel's imagination. He had glibly invented a title for a city whose foundations still lay under water or in the marshes near Sacramento.

Despite the fantastic nature of this agency it prospered at the start. No one thought to question Stevenson's integrity or asked to see a legitimate claim to the lots he sold. His was not an uncommon enterprise: similar ones flourished all along the street and in adjacent streets, inspired by the mad impulses of the gold rush, a desire to get rich quick that raged like an epidemic throughout the frontier. Gold found at the mines was quickly spent in the towns,

among which San Francisco was a metropolis. In an atmosphere of garish display, every successful miner was impelled by the demi-urge of '49 to squander his dust and speculate wherever he could in the hope of attaining instant wealth. Gold came into many hands and flowed away, as if with the movement of tides.

Like many another, young Massett had ridden an incoming wave of luck that precipitated him into Colonel Stevenson's office and exalted him to the position of Notary Public and Commissioner of Deeds. Although he was often compelled to wade through water waist-high in order to reach his sanctuary, once perched upon his stool before the long bench which served as desk he felt like a king surveying the dominions he ruled. Through a solitary dusty window he could inspect the bay with its restless spectacle of ships in full sail: some outward bound to China or India; others just arriving, laden with additional hosts of gold-seekers, after a belated and weary journey around the Horn. His duties were negligible and left him abundant leisure in which to view the scene and contemplate the mystery of his employer's chimera, New York of the Pacific, whereof he was Lord Mayor and Commissioner and Alcalde. He dreamed also of rigging himself out in an English costume that befitted such dignity of office, but he never carried out the dream.

Meanwhile he assisted at the transaction of land, a procedure of invariable simplicity, at once direct and con-

clusive. Some stranger from the mines, perhaps on a holiday, would wander into the shanty: "Got any good lots, Colonel?"

THE MYTHICAL MAYOR

The Colonel, a hearty man with a glib tongue, an easy conscience, and a ready wit, would instantly rise, pointing with a long stick to the map. He was doubly impressive because of his loose frock coat, military fatigue cap and reputation as the leader of a detachment of United States troops sent to California in 1846:

> "Yes sir, (he would say) these lots are water lots, sir. I couldn't part with these under $1,000 a lot, since from their location -- this being the head of navigation, sir, (that is a fixed fact) -- they will command shortly a very high figure. Now these on F Street I have reserved for the public schools -- I am determined to have an institution of this kind properly cared for - and next to this, sir, I have placed these lots on A, M and A, for the Courthouse, City Hall, Hall of Records, and Mayor's or Alcalde's office. That gentleman there, sir, Mr. Stephen C. Massett, has just arrived from New York to take charge of this highly responsible, lucrative and dignified position!"*

The astonished miner, activated as much by the Colonel's grandeur as by his own visions of prosperity, would then draw a buckskin pouch out of his pocket, under the realtor's direction emptying part of its contents into an old Chinese scale. When five hundred dollars in dust had thus been weighed, the Colonel would raise his hand: "The gentleman takes two lots, sir. Mr. Notary, will you kindly fill out

*Drifting About, (the Autobiography of Stephen C. Massett.) Quotations throughout this monograph, except where otherwise stated, are from this volume. See appendix.

and record the deeds?"

The transactions always ended with this single episode, because in the written agreement or bill of sale was a stipulation that a house must be erected within thirty days from the date of purchase, under penalty of forfeiture of all rights to title, which then reverted to its original holder. This of course was impossible to fulfill and bore no consequence beyond the immediate exchange -- a miner's gold for Colonel Stevenson's bit of paper. Neither it nor its possessor were ever heard from again, save in a single instance which was not a matter of litigation.

In the summer of 1849 the Alcalde and Mayor of an unfounded paradise was persuaded by certain acquaintances from the East to step forth from his illusory character and adopt one more palpable and more serviceable to a community of hard substance. Gambling was the principal amusement of those days. Men tramped in Portsmouth Plaza and jostled each other in outlandish guise. The whole city, crowded towards a center of bizarre activity composed of foolhardiness, fun and tragedy, seemed like a scene in some preposterous play that tarried hopefully until the time when its protagonist should emerge. Steve Massett had been in the city little longer than a month or two. He had come here searching for El Dorado, seeking out adventure, a change of fortune. Now he had seen a new exciting world. Suddenly, he was thrust

upon its stage, in a sense both figurative and literal, and became the object of instantaneous attention through no efforts of his own.

FIRST PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT IN SAN FRANCISCO. *

A boisterous expectancy pervaded the little building at the southwest corner of the Plaza -- possibly near the notorious Bella Union gaming house -- the night of June 22, 1849 when Massett appeared before the smoky whale-oil footlights. It was a first night, a curiosity, an occasion of tremendous import to these miners who had packed the hall far

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*Although opinions vary as to whether Massett's was the "first" San Francisco theatrical, most authorities concur in calling it "the first public entertainment ever to be given in the city." However a not inconsiderable controversy has gravitated about the fact that Rowe's and Foley's circuses appeared the same year, either before or after the concert of June 22. Benjamin Estelle Lloyd in his Lights and Shades of San Francisco, affirms that both circuses preceded it; whereas Soule, Gihon and Nesbit, predisposed perhaps towards Lloyd's contention, in their Annals of San Francisco merely state that "two circuses were established as public amusements" and add that Massett's "may properly be regarded as the first among regular amusements in San Francisco." But Catherine Coffin Phillips (Portsmouth Plaza, 1932) maintains an unequivocal position, recording Rowe's arrival "with a company of circus performers," in the bark Tasso, October 12, 1849 -- subsequent to Massett's appearance in Portsmouth Plaza by nearly four months. Such other commentators as T. Allston Brown (History of the American Stage), Louise E. Taber (California Gold Rush Days), and Constance Rourke (Troupers of the Gold Coast) offer their support to the later contention. Walter M. Leman, equally positive, states in his Memories of an Old Actor: "Stephen C. Massett came next, after the circuses and ahead of the Theatre." The whole problem resolves itself however in the fact that this Project has located a copy of the first circular announcing the opening of Rowe's Circus. It was only recently discovered and acquired by Mr. Albert Dressler and gives the opening date as October 28, 1849, considerably after Massett's theatrical.

beyond its capacity. The collector of the port had lent his piano, said to be the only one in the country, for this special event, and it had been laboriously moved across the square at a cost of sixteen dollars. The Alta California, days beforehand, had published the following complete program of the entertainment, which everybody in town must have been eager to witness and judge:

PROGRAMME

Part I.

1. Song- "When the Moon on the Lake is Beaming." Words and Music by S. C. Massett
2. Mr. Massett: The Frenchman, the Exquisite, and the Yankee in Richard III
3. Mr. Massett: "My Boyhood's Home" from opera Amilie
4. An imitation of Madame Anna Bishop, in her song of "The Banks of Guadalquiver"
5. Song- "When a Child I Roamed." Words and Music by S. C. Massett
6. An imitation of an elderly lady and a German girl, who applied for the situations of soprano and alto singers in one of the churches in Massachusetts. S. C. Massett.

Part II.

1. Song- Mr. Massett: "When Time hath bereft thee," from Gustavus III.
2. Mr. Massett: "Loss of the Steamship President," by Epes Sargent.
3. Mr. Massett: "I'm sitting on the Style, Mary," by W. R. Dempster.
4. An imitation of the New York Razor Strop Man, John Smith.
5. Ballad: "She wore a Wreath of Roses," (Mr. Massett) J.P. Knight.
6. Ballad: "List While I Sing." Composed by S. C. Massett.
7. Yankee Imitation- "Deacon Jones and Seth Slope." S. C. Massett.
8. To conclude with the celebrated "YANKEE TOWN MEETING."

Those who were lucky enough to gain admission sat in tense excitement waiting for the affair to begin.

Massett himself must have been equally excited, perhaps at first shaken with stage fright. Nevertheless because there was no alternative, he plunged into an ambitious ritual of song, recitation, burlesque, "entirely unassisted.". He sang several songs which he himself had composed. Changing from baritone to falsetto, he mimicked Anna Bishop, singing "The Banks of Guadalquiver." Then he turned to the recitative burlesque, "an imitation of the New York razor strop man," songs and recitation alternating thereafter. In conclusion he recited the "Yankee Town Meeting" which brought gusty applause from this audience, all of whom enjoyed comic Yankee imitations. In the last piece Massett took seven different parts, going from one to the other with amazing facility.

With his ruddy face, large mop of curls, small rotund figure, Steve Massett must have presented an unique appearance even in a community which verged upon disordered extravagance in all things pertaining to conduct, dress and manners. In addition to his pleasant voice he had the faculty of invention, could compose songs and play most of the favorite melodies of the day. He viewed everything with a kind of pompous humor, ever watchful for the ludicrous whether it occurred in men or events. But his forte was mimicry, the outcome of natural endowments which perhaps conspired to make him notable as an exponent of burlesque. His performance,

besides being hugely successful, remunerative, patronized to the fullest extent possible in the circumstances, was significant for another reason: it had the effect of ringing up the curtain on California theatricals. Already Massett had struck a lucky chord and thereby set the theme for all that was to follow--a theatre of rousing burlesque, manifold side-splitting Yankee imitations, which even a legitimate theatre, later, did not entirely efface.

WORLD TRAVELER

Massett has called himself "a rolling stone." To-day he would be termed a "globe trotter," or more accurately, a peripatetic minstrel. The tale of his personal voyages is like an Ariadne-thread which wanders through a labyrinth of countries, cities, towns, villages, even wildernesses, and brings together in a most curious juxtaposition all of the far places on the earth.

Massett began this odyssey, in his memoirs as in life, at St. Katherine's Dock, London, during the summer of 1837. He was then a "small-sized boy" of seventeen (born in 1820) bent on seeking adventure in that adventurous new country, America. Here was by no means an extraordinary commencement: many persons had accomplished it before Massett; his own brother had preceded him to New York by several years; since that time many another young man has sailed on a similar voyage, perhaps likewise from St. Katherine's Dock. Nevertheless, when visualized through the quixotic sensations

of "Jeems Pipes," as he later called himself, there is an air of vagueness about the departure which makes it seem extraordinary. One might, on reading his autobiography, be inclined to inquire somewhat skeptically: Whence came this youth to an age of precocious maturity without ever having experienced childhood? Had he omitted growing up? Was he without education in the practical affairs of the world? It is as if Steve Massett had always been a "small-sized boy," hitherto existing in a cloud from which he had but recently leaped to earth.

"DRIFTING ABOUT"

Primarily this impression is given by a haphazard method of disposing of the past, a habitual trait with Massett. The book itself is a chronicle of some twenty odd years of wandering, published under the title: Drifting About, or What Jeems Pipes of Pipesville Saw and Did (Carleton, 413 Broadway, New York, 1863). It had only one printing and copies are now rare. For this reason, as well as because of its oddity and the unique picture of manners and morals portrayed, it is of interest to collectors, scholars, historians, and to anybody besides who likes to delve into the legendary remnants of the last century.

EARLY LIFE

Mrs. Massett had died in 1835 and there was only a sister and the surviving parent left at the homestead, some-

where in London.

Tears coursed down the old gentleman's wrinkled countenance, when, after having given "affectionate counsel" to his son, he said: "God bless you, my dear boy." From this and later admissions of the kind it may be inferred that the Massetts were a religious middle-class English family without any particular distinction, and that as a whole they were engaged in intellectual rather than mechanical pursuits. Somewhere in this rather numerous group, if all of its allied relationships can be taken into account, there must have been at least a slight musical disposition; also a more or less indeterminate musical environment, for young Steve possessed a singing voice and a natural or acquired sense of vocal and instrumental composition. But here again one is baffled in attempting to explain precisely whence these endowments came.

There were undoubtedly other relations than those just indicated present at the London farewell, since in the early sixties Massett wrote:

> "The grave has closed over all save three who were at that gathering, yet still I cling with undying tenacity and affectionate remembrance to that last scene of my youthful home; and can but hope that we may be in another world reunited."

Then, without more amplified statement, he narrates how he put out to sea in an old West Indian bark, the Hampton, in command of Captain David Balderston. At the end of August, 95 days later, the ship sailed into the harbor of New York and came to her anchorage.

Now it appears possible that Steve was accompanied on this voyage by a brother, Jack.

> "We landed," he states, "if I remember right, at Jersey City, and I and my brother Jack crossed over in a steam tug, with our traps, to the foot of Coenties (sic) slip, thence to a 'Boarding House' in Pearl Street."

In any case the narrator was favorably impressed by what he saw in the harbor that bright day in August. Gay craft of every description rode on the water, white sails rising in sharp contrast against a background of green, with variously colored foliage which covered shores and slopes on each side of the Hudson. Everywhere was an atmosphere of nervous high energy, of bustling activity, the whole pervaded by a sense of good humor, jollity and quick bursts of laughter. It was a scene bold of outline, vast of prospect, salted with an adventurous quality somewhat lost upon an older, more uniformly established civilization which had been familiar in England. But strange as this new world may have appeared to the traveler, it yet gave little promise of the wild, tumultuous, character of its farthest frontier which he viewed afterward with mixed emotions and into whose fantastic pattern he wove his own career.

NEW YORK AND BUFFALO

New York in the August of that period (1837-8) was intensely hot, picturesque, far less populated than it is today. Shade trees grew along many of the thoroughfares, not excluding Wall Street and Broadway, that celebrated avenue of

gaiety where the theatre in America was nurtured. At frequent intervals the sidewalks were decked with lawns;hedges of hawthorn surrounded plots of greenery before some of the more imposing residences; mercantile establishments and homes were often next door to one another.

Massett's earliest recollections of this inchoate metropolis were gathered during walks he took -- particularly the first one, when he strolled along Broadway as far as White Street to seek the whereabouts of an elder brother. At the corner of Wall Street he paused to gaze upon the old, weathered Trinity Church, reading with idle wonder a few inscriptions in its graveyard. Even then the famous street was filled with life, movement, color. Stages and private carriages driven "four-in-hand" rattled past in a constant procession; pedestrians stopped at the town pump in front of the City Hospital not alone to refresh themselves but to greet acquaintances; attractive belles in lace and crinoline passed in and out of the Washington Hotel; men in frock coats, with tall silk hats,walked along leisurely or hastily as their affairs required, saluting their friends, acknowledging with gallant deference the secluded ladies who traveled in coaches. The spirited tempo of the city completely captivated Massett, but for some reason he remained there less than a month, making his next brief sojourn at Buffalo.

APPRENTICE AT LAW

In that place, hardly less elegant in the matter of urban flourishes, he became apprenticed at law, being employed as a student-clerk in the office of Thomas Jefferson Nevins. This choice of occupation, with its subsequent eventualities, was more the result of chance than of his own contriving. A prime necessity of the immigrant who had come to seek his fortune was always some means of livelihood; seldom did one's adaptability enter into the consideration at all, and many who could oppose little or no indifference to hardship had to endure bitter years before they found an economic status amenable to the new environment. However, in spite of the premise being well-founded in Massett's case, a like conclusion can scarcely be reached from the presentable facts.

He was not suited to the law; the commentaries of Blackstone bored him: the intricacies of legal lore, of suits, contracts, annulments, baffled his mind, which was more occupied with the lively, heterogenious display around him. But instead of suffering, he could throw off the shackles; his duties were light, sporadic, certainly not complicated. Occasionally he was directed to serve a paper upon some individual in the office of Fillmore, Hall and Haven. Once, while engaged on such a mission, he met Mr. Fillmore, later to be thirteenth President of the United States, who spoke kindly to him and asked how long he had been in America and whether he intended to become a lawyer. His other chief responsibility

consisted in filling in several blank notices wherein the name T. R. Beers often recurred. In fact his employment embraced more of leisure than of laborious effort. There were times when he had nothing more urgent to engage his attention than the perusal of Blackstone. This volume he could put aside when he chose, taking in its place the works of William Shakespeare, which he studied assiduously. Richard III he memorized at length, and portions of Othello, a scene or two from Macbeth.

During his stay in Buffalo, he witnessed a fine production of Richard III by Charles H. Eaton, at the Eagle Street Theatre. Somehow he became acquainted with a fellow countryman, connected with the theatre, who issued him occasional "orders" of free admission. He saw the opera Cinderella, and the play, The Lady of Lyons, with important theatrical people in leading roles, for the first time in his life. Young Steve of course was dazzled by the array; here was life, with all the glamour that pleased him best, in the world of the theatre. In it he too would take his place and mark out for himself a position of world renown. It was the ordinary boy's dream of conquest which has fluttered in countless imaginations, then has flown away never to be heard from again. But he whom people called the "red-faced little Englishman" had time to brood upon his ambition. Day after day, in his hours of leisure, he fanned the flame (which he fancied would burst forth at any moment into fire) by studying with greater

diligence than ever the plays of Shakespeare.

AMATEUR ACTOR

About this time a group of associated law students started a Thespian Society, which he at once joined in a mood of ardent enthusiasm. Utilizing a hall in the Kremlin Block for its amateur theatricals, the society presented Richard III, with Massett pre-eminent,if not wholly convincing in the title role. The dramatic effect of this effort was ruined in the last scene with Richmond, when Massett, striking an attitude of combat, and uttering the words "My soul and body on the action both..." snapped his wooden stage sword in half. One piece of the weapon flew into the eye of a small boy, leader of the orchestra, who instantly dropped his battered melodeon and ran out of the hall crying. The accident not only killed the scene but rendered the hero ludicrous and heralded the imminent termination of the play as, in a confusion of laughter and shouting, the principals were forced to retreat into the wings.

Soon afterward the entire society disbanded. The students found other means of amusing themselves; young Massett, like the others, turned his attention to the sensational happenings of the year 1838. When the steamer Caroline was burned, Buffalo became a cauldron of fury. Citizen soldiery occupied Navy Island as a gesture of defense against "the traitorous British." Mass meetings were organized to foment a war with Britain; the streets were

everlastingly filled with military companies, marching to the music of fife and drum. Hardly had this furor abated when another was kindled by news of the arrival at New York of the steamship Sirius, followed shortly by The British Queen, with such notables as Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews aboard.

Caught in the turbulence of these months, Massett grew restless; he moved from the law office of Nevins to the commission house of Mr. A. H. Scoville, a merchant who prospered not at all, and after a time was forced to release his solitary clerk for lack of business.

SALESMAN AND CLERK

Meanwhile a letter had arrived from New York. One of Massett's brothers was assistant to the bookkeeper of Thomas L. Chester, carpet merchant, at 203 Broadway. He may have promised Stephen employment or may have merely intimated that it could be obtained; in either case young Massett immediately set out upon another journey at the end of which he found himself established as an out-door clerk and occasionally a salesman of "Super Royal Wilton" or "Ingrain" rugs.

The society into which he had now moved, as if following a crooked but unerring line of fortune, was charged with the vibrant theatrical glitter which had first excited him. Almost overnight, having selected the Broadway Hotel for his residence, he was befriended by a group of musical people who were then singing in opera at the Park Theatre. From no less a personage than Mr. Giubeli, the basso, he

received passes to the theatre. Once or twice he was admitted backstage, where his youthful imagination invested everything he saw with an other-worldly charm. Once inside the stage-door he was entranced, beholding with a kind of reverence or idolatry the dressing rooms, mere stalls naked of furnishings save perhaps an old cracked mirror or a discarded stick of makeup, the greenroom with its litter of frayed costumes and other trappings associated with the vagrant life of the players; the players themselves, colorful figures, perhaps lounging about, talking or silent, as they awaited their call to go on -- all these things delighted the boy more than any other things he had ever seen.

Miss Poole, small and charming, always energetic accompanied Massett on many a pleasant walk along the Battery, which was a fashionable promenade in that era, filled with beautiful gay women and handsome men, the elite of New York. There were concerts at the City Hotel, nights at the opera; informal dinners; a whole fascinating cycle of activity which was further enhanced by the presence of celebrities. At one of these gatherings young Massett was introduced to General George P. Morris, author of "Woodman Spare That Tree," a song writer of extraordinary success, who became his friend.

OPINION ON EDWIN FORREST

The years 1839-40 were crowded with pageants. The theatre had been given new stimulus by the arrival of famous actors, singers, musicians, from Europe. In 1839 Edwin Forrest

played Richelieu and King Lear at the National, performances so impressive in their finished excellence that they excited the wildest and most extravagant praise. Massett himself after a lapse of twenty years, wrote:

> "Although, as my ancient friend Mrs. Malaprop observed, comparisons are odious, I conceive the genius of this great actor in these impersonations, towers so immeasurably above the efforts of all others I have seen that it is simply ridiculous to place them in the same category."

Atwill's Music Saloon, at the sign of the Golden Lyre, 201 Broadway, was in that day a lounge for musical people. Massett, who had made the acquaintance of Mr. Atwill, was in the habit of frequenting this place during his leisurely afternoons, and thus he met many of the foremost musicians who flashed across the horizon of 1840; Braham, Joseph Phillip Knight, Mrs. Sutton, Signor De Begnis, Henry Russell, Mrs. Edward Loder, and others, including Henry C. Watson, a young English musician and composer who later made his reputation as a critic.

In the midst of these people Massett does not seem to have been abashed. Apparently he was somewhat more than tolerated, if not sought out, and among the lesser personages he found a number of friends. Fortune, in an obscure, often devious manner, kept him in her mind. He was given opportunities to sing, encouraged to cultivate his voice, once or twice it was suggested he should consider a stage career. On the commercial side, he proved himself singularly unskilled. Bookkeeping was a mystery he never could penetrate; he was

inadept, comical, frequently ridiculous as a clerk. His one experience with a savings bank is so preposterous that one is tempted to set it aside as fiction. His one virtue was that he wrote an uncommonly fine hand and was therefore in demand as a copyist.

DEBUT AS A SINGER

Palpable forces were at work, changing Massett's course of existence. In the barber shop of Jim Grant on Ann Street, he made the acquaintance of a man whose influence finally prevailed to turn his thoughts away from business:

> "Look here, old man," (his acquaintance said) "I heard you sing 'My Boyhood's Home' devilish well the other evening; you've got a capital voice and ought to make (excuse the joke) capital out of it! Why don't you go on the stage? Look, I can introduce you to Mr. Latham, manager of the Charleston Theatre..."

Massett consented. Together they sought Mr. Latham at the Halleck House, corner of Reade and Broadway. The manager, after hearing one or two songs, appeared strongly impressed. He said, among other complimentary things, that Massett's voice would some day make a fortune, and offered the young man an opportunity to accompany him to Charleston. He promised moreover that he would instruct Massett in music and do everything else indeed which would insure the latter's successful stage debut. The idea of a career now began to haunt this young enthusiast. Figures and accounts were a bad omen, he thought; the carpet business was becoming slack, forecasting another such end as had befallen him in Buffalo.

Sometime towards the middle of November 1841, after a last desperate experience at the counting house of W. C. Pickersgill in Wall Street whence he had gone after leaving the carpet merchant's establishment, he sailed in the schooner, Signet, for Charleston, South Carolina. But the theatre business had not prospered either, it appeared. Mr. Latham had suffered reverses. His greeting was tinged with bitterness and his attitude could hardly be called friendly. A few days later when Massett came strolling leisurely into the greenroom, he was accosted by the manager with this abrupt question: "What two songs will you sing tomorrow night, sir?"

Massett was both astonished and frightened. He stammered out some reply, hinting he was not prepared to make an appearance so soon and reminding the other of his promise made in New York. But the manager was one of those hard men capable of driving a bargain to the limit. It was folly to argue against his harsh logic: "I can't afford to be paying idle people, or wait till it suits their convenience. I thought you had a hundred songs at your tongue's end, sir!"

Pushed into the engagement with a threat, ushered onto the stage with an expletive, young Massett began his career under the most inauspicious circumstances. Although he had but slight knowledge of theatrical tradition, in his confusion, anxiety, fear, he unwittingly obeyed its fundamental tenet, "the show must go on."

> "It was to me a momentous occurrence' (he commented later in the guise of 'Jeems Pipes')and though my duties on that occasion were very simple, the state of mental prostration under which I labored during the whole of that day, I shall never forget. I could eat nothing--I could drink nothing: and as the hour approached for proceeding to the theatre, I felt more like a convict going to execution than anything else."

Billed as Mr. Stephens, the vocalist, he was not needed until nine o'clock, but he appeared at seven. The entrance to the stage door was at the end of a long, dirty alley, which now, in rainy weather, was ankle-deep in water, with a scattering of stray bricks, chunks of wood, and other debris over which the unwary might stumble. He plunged into this gloom with trepidation in his heart, groping his way through dimly lighted passages to the greenroom. He spoke to no one, no one spoke to him. Vaguely he was aware of the dismal relics left from glories that had passed: swords, guns, pikes, thrones, sceptres, palaces, castles, streets, gardens, ships, gravel walks made of canvas, broken china, masks, torches, coffins, scaffolds, even thunder and lightning. At last when it came time for him to go on, his knees were shaking; gone were all his thoughts of conquest, lost were all his ideas of ambition. His shirt collar, which had stood stiffly upright, touching very red ears, was now wilted with perspiration. But somehow he managed to get through his first song, "The Light of Other Days." Applause exploded in the house and he had to repeat it,as also the next number, "Oh! Would I Were a Boy again."Then he bolted from the stage

like a frightened animal, not stopping until he reached the seclusion of his room.

MASSETT'S FIRST PLAY

The Charleston Theatre during the winter of 1842 could not boast of pretentious audiences, elaborate productions, original plays, nor celebrated actors. In order to subsist it had to depend upon the redoubtable energy and tyrannical management of Latham, who, besides driving his company with merciless fury, with embittered invective, played various utility parts himself whenever it was necessary. Since most of his plays were time-worn, the manager frequently had to adopt extreme measures in achieving what he considered a splendid production. One may well believe that he was unscrupulous, if not an actual scoundrel, at such times when his purse was threatened. Among other practices, it was his custom to utilize every member of the troupe in as many characters as they could impersonate during a performance; and it was not long before he decided to employ his new vocalist in the capacity of actor.

EARLY STAGE CAREER

When the play Rob Roy was posted in a little glass case in the greenroom (a custom of those days) Steve Massett was cast for the part of McStuart. So great was his nervousness. that a week before the production started he rushed into the office of Henry Tuthill, the stage manager,

and begged to have as quickly as possible the book from which he could copy his lines. There were about ten in all, but for the next six or seven days, and each night with the aid of candles, he made a stubborn assault upon the task of memorization. At dress rehearsal, notwithstanding the bullying to which he was subjected by the relentless Latham, his stage fright was so acute that he had to read his part from the book.

It is rather ironical that he who had so quick a perception for the ludicrous in others was himself the almost constant butt of ridicule all during his Charleston experiences. Made up in the character of McStuart, he resembled a preposterous bag pipe player, wearing a large sword which dangled between his naked legs and threatened to trip him every time he moved. Unfortunately he had to make the opening speech of the play. He spoke so low that Major Galbraith (played by Latham) shouted with an oath: "Why don't you speak out, you ----!" Terrified, Massett answered in a stage-whisper: "You can speak the rest yourself; I know nothing," and fled as Mr. Bailie Nicol Jarvie came after him with a red-hot stage poker. Later, when his next cue came, the doughty McStuart was home in bed.

Having thus passed two of the major crises of his life, he went on to other ridiculous triumphs as if playing farces. Even in opera, although he sang well, his acting was awkward, comic, occasionally cataclysmic in its humorous

effects. He played once in Sonnambula with the Soquin Troupe, shortly after their arrival in Charleston; but on being cast for the difficult role of Matteo in Fra Diavolo, he resolutely refused to accept it.

After this engagement, Butler, the tragedian, made his appearance, opening with The Avenger. Massett was assigned to the role of Conradin. Before the play ended those scenes in which Conradin appeared held more the aspect of burlesque than of serious drama. Nevertheless, he played, one after another, minor parts in The Lady of Lyons, Hamlet, Henry VI, London Assurance, until at last he found a part as Pistol in The Merry Wives of Windsor. that better suited him.

He must have given a creditable performance, for some weeks later, at her benefit, Miss Charlotte Barnes requested that he play the part of Paris in Romeo and Juliet. Massett described his Paris, "my crowning achievement," which was marred only in its final passage before the tomb of the Capulets, when Paris,mortally stricken by the sword of Romeo, (played by Charles Howard) falls to the ground dead.Somewhere up above, out of sight of the audience, the stage carpenter carelessly let some water trickle down upon Paris' face,causing the corpse to roll its head. The audience of course was convulsed with laughter and the curtain descended upon the seemingly inevitable burlesque of even Massett's most laudable effort.

SONG WRITER

Sometime during his stay in Charleston, where he was but slightly acquainted, he encountered a girl with large dark eyes. There is no evidence that he ever spoke to this stranger or even knew her name, but he fell in love with her appearance. Such a situation has more than once been the motivation for a fine lyric. Massett's expression took the form of a song whose motif was fairly popular at the time:

> "Wilt thou come, love, come? Oh, come with me, and I'll give thee A happy home, Where a true heart waits for thee." *

He titled it "When the Moon on the Lake is Beaming," and on his return to New York, precipitated by an attack of yellow fever, sold it to William Dubois for $5.00 cash and fifty published copies.

In spite of the accomplishment, there is little reason to suppose that Massett had had formal schooling in music or rhyme-making, or even that he was predisposed towards self-expression. But the success of his original endeavor undoubtedly brought to him a recognition of what acquaintances called "his talent." To such a circumstance may be ascribed the commencement of an impulse which afterward flourished, though only at intervals, in other compositions of song, rhyme, and prose. However, by accident or design, his immediate concern was still with the theatre.

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* See Appendix

IN OPERA

The Charleston engagement had been a rather sorry one, for when it concluded Latham again drove his own bargain, paying Massett $2.50 for the entire season although he had agreed upon a salary of $6.00 a week, with board. In a straitened financial situation the erstwhile actor was forced to accept employment in the Secretary of State's office. This terminated when he contracted yellow fever. Once more, his funds depleted by medical expenses, he returned to New York, where his friendships among theatrical, musical and literary people had been augmented. Through a Dr. Levitt, who entertained lavishly in his rooms at Warren and Broadway, Massett was introduced to William Mitchell, manager of the Olympic Theatre, and to Bengough, George Loder, Harry Watson, besides several others occupying prominence at the theatre.

When the opera Amilie was brought to the Olympic at Loder's suggestion, he persuaded Mitchell that Steve Massett should impersonate Count Van Der Tiemer. On this point the autobiography is most precise:

> "I at first could not entertain the idea at all, my career at Charleston on the stage having been all but pleasant; I intended to return, if possible, to some private employment. In this I did not succeed, and accordingly, at the urgent solicitation of many, I accepted the offer of Mr. Manager Mitchell."

On the bills Massett was presented as Mr. Raymond, but the reason for this pseudonym is not quite clear. Mary Taylor, taking a man's part, Mrs. Timm in the title role, drew

good houses and the opera continued for thirty consecutive nights, the boxes being filled with distinguished personages, while those undistinguished sat in the pit. Here, as at Charleston, Massett was self-conscious. As if he had never before made an appearance, he shrank before this public, most of whom he felt knew him well. He liked to sing, but the acting presented grave perils, and only with difficulty did he contrive enough courage to go through with it. The occasion was doubly significant because it was an initial attempt at producing legitimate, full-length opera at The Olympic, a bandbox theatre which hitherto had been patronized for its burlesques. Fortunately, Massett's fright had no effect upon his voice; he knew the arias well and rendered them in a style that excited applause and brought a few audible murmurs of "encore."

A TRAVELING MINSTREL

At the end of the engagement Massett's theatrical activities obtained further scope in a tour of the Atlantic seaboard which he made with George H. Hill, known far and near as Yankee Hill, whose chief claim to prominence lay in the fact that he was a waggish practical joker with a flair for entertaining. These two troupers generally announced themselves "Yankee Hill's Budget of Fun and Comic Olio" and played almost exclusively in the dining rooms of various hotels where they stopped. At Boston, during what must have been a signal occasion for young Massett, he was permitted to

sang for the first time in public his own song, the bills proclaiming him: "Mr. Raymond, Celebrated London Vocalist." The venture as a whole was of indeterminate success, but it concluded, at least for some time, Massett's connection with the theatre.

In the summer of '43, like the sudden flare of fire, "Jeems Pipes" came into being; although not yet in all his baroque outlines which more often than not played around the incredible and touched upon the ridiculous. The new coinage was superimposed upon the youth by himself, although it had been suggested by William T. Porter, editor of The Spirit of the Times, one of Massett's innumerable New York acquaintances. This man, who appears a somewhat flamboyant journalist of a type common enough in that epoch, had bestowed the name "Colonel Pipes" upon the vocalist when he was with Mitchell at the Olympic. On the return to New York of Yankee Hill's two-man troupe, it became known that the younger of its members intended making a voyage up the Mediterranean to Malta and Smyrna; whereupon Porter invited him to write an occasional letter to his paper. When he accepted the offer, Massett likewise accepted the dignity it implied; therefore he decided to perpetuate the name "Jeems Pipes" in each of his communications.

GLOBE TROTTER

The second odyssey began in July with no other instigation than that proffered by a casual friend who himself

intended making the trip to visit relatives in Italy and desired companionship.

> "I was always very fond of the sea," Massett explained, "and the idea of making a summer voyage along the classic shores of the Mediterranean was too great a temptation to be lightly thought of, so I accordingly husbanded my resources, and bent all my energies to the accomplishment of my wishes."

Like most other enterprises slightly inspired, impulsively undertaken, it brought nevertheless an indelible imprint down into the future. Frayed remnants of experience were now carried over into a foreign environment, constantly fluent, constantly shifting, where they received a stern regimentation in the light of contrast and reminiscence. Other sensations crowded into the expansive mental picture, producing a fund of worldly knowledge which was uncommon in a lad of twenty-three. Within the space of a few days he sailed past Spain, sighted Cape Trafalgar, viewed the Moorish city of Tangier, the Rock of Gibraltar, heard the legends of the extraordinary "Gipsy Inn" of Tarifa, saw in the midst of impressive landscapes under brilliant skies the islands of Galatea and Goza, with their old ruins, monasteries, picturesque towns.

He visited Malta, spending some days there; then set sail for Smyrna, in Asia Minor, situated along the shore of a large bay in the shadow of Mount Pagus. Here, wandering through a city of minarets, white-domed mosques, sombre groves of cypress, he encountered the people of various nations:

Turks, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Persians, Arabs. He visited the city of Constantinople with its weird medley of sounds, strange sights, stranger populace; everywhere, although himself a stranger, he managed to make acquaintances who were solicitous of his welfare and hospitable beyond expectation. The journey lasted some six months.

On his return, in the winter of 1843-44, he again fell in with fortunate acquaintances and made another appearance behind the footlights as "Razlecroft the Wizard" in the opera Peri, composed by his friend James G. Maeder and produced in Boston. Afterwards he was installed at a desk in the County Clerk's office in New York, augmenting a slender income by singing in the choir of St. Thomas Church; then riding on a political tide, he was appointed clerk to the "Counsel of Corporation" in the firm of Brady and Maurice, a position which he occupied nearly four years.

THE GOLD RUSH

By the autumn of 1848 a new excitement had arisen; the compact city, which looked more like a township, became alive with rumor, with facts, sometimes contradictory, with song, with escapades of adventure, with action. Gold had been discovered in California. Men decked themselves out in elegant or fantastic costumes, and marched to the wharves seeking a ship that would take them to Chagres or Vera Cruz or around the Horn. Others purchased elaborate equipment, prepared to follow the routes of the pioneers overland. The cry

everywhere was "Westward, ho!" Its contagion reached into all avenues of existence: into the banks, into the emporiums, into the musty halls of law in Wall Street, where Massett occupied his unexpected niche. Young men and old men deserted their responsibilities to rush posthaste as if driven by the furies, toward the gold fields. Steve Massett, who had already been smitten by wanderlust, required far less stimulus than this; he soon joined the exodus, sailing from Baltimore early in January of '49.

The schooner Sovereign was bound for Vera Cruz, but three or four days out a disagreement occurred among its lusty, clamant, song-singing passengers, and the captain was persuaded to change his course towards Chagres, in the hope that a ship could be chartered on the western side of the Isthmus, which would convey them to San Francisco. The journey was fraught with episodes both humorous and tragic; death claimed four of the company; illness or despair overtook others; but the extent of Massett's suffering seems to have been encompassed by his account of the trip by mule across the Isthmus:

> "Away I went, fording rivers, tumbling into holes, donkey's belly-band giving way, saddle sliding off and I with it -- donkey cuts and runs -- I after him up to my middle in water -- night coming on -- dread of the fever -- find myself alone -- narrow, stony, flinty, rugged pathway -- all sorts of animals my companions -- boy catches donkey, fixes saddle -- I remount, again to be jolted, again to be thrown off. . . ."

After eight days he was overjoyed by a bath and a "lay-down" at the American Hotel of Panama, all terrors of hill,valley, stream, having been left behind by "me and Rosinante."

ARRIVAL IN SAN FRANCISCO

Ninety-eight days after they had set out from Panama, on a "vile ship, vilely provisioned," the argonauts reached San Francisco. Massett, with scarcely enough accessories to justify a carpetbag, with six dollars worth of Mexican coins in his pocket, was met on the morning of his arrival by Colonel Stevenson, clad as usual in a loosely buttoned frock coat and military fatigue cap.The interview which immediately followed shows the benign luck that seems to have dogged the footsteps of this nomad, in greater or lesser degree, wherever he went:

> "You are just the young man for me, (cried the colonel) . You of course understand drawing deeds, mortgages and so on; in fact the general routine of a lawyer's office. You've been in a good school at Brady's and I think we can get along very well together. . . . I'll make you Alcalde, sir! (Of New York of the Pacific!) Notary Public,sir! Mayor of the city, sir! Come and breakfast with me, sir, tomorrow."
>
> "At what time, colonel?"
>
> "At six o'clock, sir! . . . As to pay, I give you $150 a month to commence with, and your board, -- that's two ounces ($32) a week."

Thus, in a manner only less incredible than El Dorado itself, was ushered into the frontier the man who became its original protagonist of the stage. Here, though not

formally organized as such, was already a theatre, as if some invisible prompter were at work together with a troupe of actors, a scene-shifter. It was plastic material, broad in scope but capable of being modified, reduced to scale and subjected to control. In a large sense one may consider that Massett's effort started a trend in that direction. His arrival had been timely, his repertoire of that loosely knit, haphazard character which just then fitted the California mood. Whatever its value as entertainment, the incidence created by Massett's feat has been deemed of sufficient import to assure it place in most of the histories of the period. Its effect upon the man himself may be imagined.

Hitherto his rewards had been insignificant; now, suddenly, he was the possessor of what must have seemed by contrast a large fortune as the result of a single night's performance. One critic of the period, somewhat later, in a tone of disparagement, said: "The only thing solid and material about the affair was the $500, a result that almost turned Massett's head."* The observation is by no means presumptuous, for at this time Jeems Pipes began to reach stature, with a bushy mustache and goatee, and an air of self-assurance which would have shamed the timid boy who had quailed

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*This criticism, written by George E. Barnes, appeared in the San Francisco Evening Bulletin, June 6, 1896. It is presented here not to disparage Massett's performance, but merely to indicate a probability which Massett's contemporaries, in the height of enthusiasm, blandly overlooked; and thus to point out by severe contrast the course which a present-day judgment might adopt.

before a bank teller in the city of New York. Now the fantastic weavings of time and fate began to make a pattern that quickly changed as the shuttle moved in place after place.

OFF TO SACRAMENTO

Colonel Stevenson one day introduced Massett to Samuel Brannan who in the fifties became a potentate of wealth in San Francisco and whose name still survives in one of its streets. At this man's suggestion (to auction off a large stock of his goods) Massett drifted, in a general flux, to Sacramento, which looked more like an encampment of vagabonds than a community. In thickets of live oak camp fires smouldered. Tents or crude cabins housed hundreds of fever-stricken victims who had survived the hard overland journey only to arrive at this extremity. Ten thousand people had gathered there, most of them crazy with getting and spending money. Miners were constantly arriving with gold which they spent lavishly as if it were of no more value than water. Gamblers were innumerable, housed in tents or shanties where cheap liquor was dispensed at fifty cents a glass, and stacks of Mexican coins littered the tables. There was a theatre, a minute affair of canvas with a sheet iron roof, and one hotel in which Massett found lodging the night of his arrival.

Amid this turmoil the newcomer once again struck up an acquaintance with one Charles Brewster of Boston. Almost immediately the pair organized an auction house and their enterprise prospered more than many others founded on a far

less impulsive basis. Prices were as ungoverned as the tumultuous necessity of the men who made them. Certain commodities were scarce: flour, when offered at Fort Sutter, occasioned an orgy of spending. Massett proved himself a capable auctioneer, having those capacities for exciting risibility which keep a crowd in good humor and in a mood to buy. Gradually they dabbled in the sale of other goods than the staples of food and clothing with which they had started; at last they sold land. Money flowed into their coffers. On one occasion Massett traded a jew's-harp to a Mexican boy for a lump of gold worth eight dollars, although the article had originally been purchased at one dollar a gross. Profits from their first venture alone, indeed from the initial sale, were in excess of $2,000.

Towards autumn heavy rains set in and with them arrived a theatrical troupe to open the new Eagle Theatre, "a pasteboard Temple of the Muses." The wind had been blowing a gale all day and a torrential downpour threatened the town with innundation; but people pushed and scrambled for seats at the pretentious opening of a play called The Bandit Chief, in which a female tragedian from the Theatre Royal, New Zealand, was to make her California debut. The excellence of this performance may be judged by the style of the leading lady's speech:

> " 'Is 'eart is as 'ard as a stone - and I'd rayther take a basilisk, and wrap 'is cold fangs around me, than surrender meself to the cold himbraces of a 'eartless villain!"

Yet the theatre was filled with curious excitable miners who had paid as high as $5.00 for admission.

During the tremendous flood of '49 and '50 which all but swept Sacramento away in turbulent water, Massett succumbed to a feeling of malcontent which had slowly possessed him with the increase in physical discomfort. He had hardly disposed of his interest in the auction firm, when he encountered Henry Herz, pianist-composer, who was then traveling about California after a prolonged tour of Mexico. Since they had been friendly in New York, Herz asked Massett to sing at his concerts, proposing that the vocalist name his own terms. He promptly did so -- in the vernacular of the golden land: "Mr. Herz, I'll take $500, sir."

The older man was stunned by such a proposal, affirmed he could not afford a fee which he plainly considered exorbitant, and ultimately compromised, at the intervention of a disinterested party, for $200. As might have been expected there was a farcical aspect connected with Massett's re-emergence in theatricals. He recited a somewhat laughable little sketch, The Frenchman and the Rats, wherein are recounted the difficulties of a French traveler at an English country inn, who, during the night, is awakened by a large rat, come to gnaw at a piece of cheese which he had placed beneath his pillow on retiring. Just as the anecdote had reached this point two rats with long tails scampered across the stage, as if to burlesque the speaker. A roar of laughter,

mingled with shouts of "bravo," came from the audience, and even Herz could not restrain his mirth.

OFF TO HONOLULU

Despite the fact that several days later Massett gave a concert at Sacramento on his own initiative, receiving nearly $300 for two hours' "exertion," nothing could have seemed more unlikely than that he would soon turn to the stage for a livelihood. He was still a young man with a curious eager interest in the contemporary scene and a hunger for voyages. Money had come easily;he was free to follow whatever impulses appealed to him. A career, in the serious sense, could not then have been important. Moreover, when he returned to San Francisco,the theatrical situation there had considerably altered. Noted and capable performers had been attracted by the lure of unprecedented wealth. The Bella Union had been turned into a theatre of sorts. In the autumn of '49 C. C. Alvered, with a company of professional comedians, had appeared there, offering entertainment of a variety and scope which no performer, single-handed, could hope to equal. Rowe's circus had exhibited to enormous throngs in the amphitheatre on Kearny Street, between California and Sacramento. The troupe which had played at the Eagle Theatre of Sacramento, driven out by the flood, had barnstormed into San Francisco. Audiences were becoming more critical, more difficult to please. If Massett entertained any thought of repeating his first venture, he should have been immediately discouraged by the

outlook. Instead, he made a voyage to the Sandwich Islands, visiting the capitals of Maui and Oahu. In the latter port, Honolulu, where he moved as usual in the midst of the socially prominent, he was persuaded to offer a solo concert after the manner of his previous successes, news of which had reached the Islands in various San Francisco journals.

Again he went through his repertoire of songs, comic recitations, burlesque, accompanying himself on a grand piano lent for the occasion by a daughter of the United States Consul. In spite of the oppressing heat, the affair was well attended. A royal party, including King Kammehameha, occupied three boxes, all that the small theatre possessed; the first and only "Tier" was taken up by English and Americans, while a throng of natives, men, women, children, over-filled the pit.

On this occasion Massett was zealous in his efforts to inspire an emotional response. Usually he achieved the effect by selecting some "tender hearted" lady, old or young, who could be brought to tears by the sentiment expressed in one of his most repeated offerings, "The Old Arm Chair." Several natives, misunderstanding the phenomenon when it occurred as an insult to their women, rose in a group, shook their fists at Massett, and in the most extraordinary tongue he had ever heard muttered threats of vengeance. The disturbance caused an awkward pause, but did not stop the concert. Afterwards, by way of righting matters, His Majesty, the King

honored Massett at the palace over a glass or two of sherry wine.

CRITICAL OPINION

Next day an encomium which must have warmed this "Captain Cook of troubadours" more than the king's wine appeared in The Polynesian. It said:

> "The American vocalist's first appearance at the Hawaiian Hall last evening was attended by His Majesty, King Kammehameha, and the principal English and American residents, who appeared quite delighted with the rare and intellectual treat afforded them. Mr. Massett was waited upon at the close of his performance by a number of influential gentlemen, who requested him to defer his departure for a few days, to enable them to enjoy a repetition of his ballad entertainment."

With increasing frequency, like comments were published in the press of many countries as Massett peregrinated. His connections among editors and men of undoubted influence in all walks of life were ubiquitous: therefore it is difficult to judge whether such notices were the outcome of unbiased opinion or favoritism. Particularly one wonders what the people of San Francisco thought. Was this wanderer a mere ballad merchant of little consequence in the parade of humanity; or was he a genuinely entertaining satirist, burlesque artist, singer? Was he indeed, as far as California is concerned, a true public figure in the strictest sense?

These questions are significant because they challenge alike the judgments of present and past. It must be remembered that Massett was a great character actor on the

stage of life; his activity was of the widest scope. He had a part, so to speak, in almost every major drift of the Gold Rush period. Yet he came and went, in and out of the picture, so often that he was hardly a stable influence in its development. In the disguise of "Jeems Pipes" he very often deceived himself and may have clouded the perspicacity of others who sought to define him, or evaluate his deeds. One commentator, writing in The Evening Bulletin of June 8, 1896, after Massett had left California, declared in exasperation: "This Steve Massett is a sort of enigma."

Returning from Honolulu in 1851, he proceeded at once to Sacramento where, through a chance encounter with R. H. Taylor, of the Marysville Herald, he purchased a half-interest and became co-editor of that paper. This action of course precipitated a further move, to Marysville. The office of the paper was a small wooden affair of indifferent architecture, one of those portable houses, (so common then in California) which had been sent around the Horn. Settled here, Massett turned to journalism with a sanguine spirit which seems to have been lacking in most of his other first ventures, -- probably because "Jeems Pipes" had at last come into full control, in matters both practical and Olympian. However, during the year or so in which he was occupied with the pen, Massett was not entirely obscured by his other self, his Boswell. On at least two occasions he took to the boards: once. daringly it may be supposed, in San Francisco, and again at Marysville.

SAN FRANCISCO AGAIN

Meanwhile, San Francisco theatricals were becoming competitive affairs. Maguire had opened the Jenny Lind, Robinson and Evrard, their Dramatic Museum. Other theatres had begun to flourish, each of them offering a different attraction in the scramble for public preference. There was no dearth of professional talent, of skilled actors, accomplished comedians and comic singers. Names had become a by-word in the West as elsewhere. Yankee Robinson had stepped to the front and was holding forth nightly at his Museum in programs interspersed with wit, recitation, song, inimitable burlesque. And it was in this arena in 1851 that Massett once more made his appearance. He had come down from Marysville on business concerned with the Herald and decided, as he states, "to do a little business professionally on my own account."

Massett at this time cannot have had a large following and there was Dr. Robinson on the scene, a formidable rival who had established his place in the limelight. Therefore a "profitable" remuneration could hardly have been forecast. On this occasion as on many others, a small but influential group of New Yorkers who held Massett in high esteem, persuaded him to give the concert; undoubtedly their activities were responsible in some measure for its reward, $600 earned "by the labor of one hour and a half." The Marysville concert was similarly sponsored, nurtured, accomplished, after a lengthy correspondence about it, (not unlike

the press-agent publicity of the present day), had appeared in the papers.

FOREIGN TRAVEL

In the spring of 1852 Massett was again seized by the urge to travel. While Maguire was building the San Francisco Hall on Washington Street, while the Chapmans were making a tour of the mines, while young Edwin Booth was just entering the door to recognition and Mrs. Crabtree was entertaining dreams of Lotta's rise, Steve Massett, unaware of these foreshadowing events in California, was leading a vagrant existence in Europe. Through some happy coincidence, he always managed to crowd in upon world affairs, and often to insinuate himself into the inner conclaves of the envied and select. He was a kind of freemason, with an entree into all classes of society, high or low, exalted or humble.

In the old world his adventures have a somewhat classical flavor. He saw for the first time the theatre in all its sophisticated elegance, at London, Paris, Rome. At Paris particularly he was impressed by a strange contrast to what we had known in California as he records it in Drifting About:

> ". . .all order and politeness -- no fighting and rowdyism, no scrambling for places . . . . Then the acting and scenery, and the orchestra, and the toot-onsomble (sic) -- Oh Lord, its ruinous! I have heard Der Freyschutz,'I Puritani, Sonnambula,William Tell,Lucia di Lammermoor, as I never expect to hear them again -- no boisterous applause -- no hi-hi-ing -- no ridiculous encoring -- no ill-timed brava-ing, or anything of the sort."

He visited old scenes of classic interest: Warwick Castle, Kenilworth, Stratford-on-Avon. He stood awed in the house Shakespeare was born in, made a pilgrimage to the tomb of the great poet and tarried in Ann Hathaway's cottage. He went to the Louvre and the Gardens of Luxembourg and attended High Mass at the Cathedral of Notre Dame. He saw the ancient Coliseum at Rome, the Leaning Tower at Pisa. All these things and an infinite number of others, he saw through the quixotic eyes of Jeems Pipes and duly recorded them in his correspondence to the Knickerbocker Magazine. Several times during his stay in Italy he witnessed the presentation of Uncle Tom's Cabin, in Italian. The piece seems to have endured a tremendous popularity without the usual opprobrium of being "well-worn." From Piedmont, Jeems Pipes wrote to Knickerbocker's:

> "I saw it akted and the Italian who took the part of Uncle Tom affected the audience to tears, the women crying like sixty" (sic).*

During this tour de force of sight-seeing, he encountered Herz and Braham again, and on his return to London was made an honorary member of the distinguished Garrick Club, in Hart Street, Covent Garden, where he met and mingled with the great and near-great of last century's literary men. In the smoking room, whose mellow atmosphere was forbidden to all save members, he sat with Sir Edwin Landseer, William Thackeray, Albert Smith, Walter Lacey and others less notable.

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*See Appendix

Later he came in close contact with Charles Dickens, but there is no evidence that they were ever actually acquainted.

BACK TO CALIFORNIA

For nearly two years he roamed about, finally sailing from Liverpool, in the summer of '53, across the Atlantic to New York. He had left California with a fortune which, prudently husbanded, still amounted to several thousand dollars when he reached the United States again. But an unfortunate speculation depleted his finances, and by the end of the year he was on his way back to California "to woo Dame Fortune on the shores of the Pacific." Massett was now about thirty-three. He had developed quite a paunch through his predilection toward the Pickwickian ideal of good living, and must have presented a comical figure, standing perchance at the bow of the ship, stocky legs planted wide apart on the deck, eyes fixed towards the far away destination with its promise of gold. His hair was thick, richly copper-colored; his mustache bristled with an odd pompous dignity. But in his heart he cherished the perennial Jeems Pipes. This "Pipes" sought to govern his creator: "If your pocket is light, make your heart light to match it -- If your coat is torn, laugh while you patch it." Accordingly, when Jeems Pipes came alive in San Francisco, on land purchased for his exclusive and unique renascence, the facts present a paradox which would have been objectionable in any other time and city.

THE PLACE CALLED PIPESVILLE

A whole forest of legend has grown up around the place called Pipesville. Conflicting opinions exist as to its nature, location and habitues. "Pipe's" own account has not always proved veracious, much less accurate, because of his tendency to invent and elaborate insubstantial happenings. However, it may be reasonably established that Massett in 1854 purchased a small piece of land, hoping, as so many others had done in his absence, to get rich through speculation. He was a novice in such matters; his original intent exploded as soon as he saw the property, lying in a marsh sixty feet or so below the street level. He had not even waited for the omnibus, but ran panting out along the Old Mission Road, past Yerba Buena Cemetery, across the bridge, and halted near the "lordly castle of Mr. Moss," known as Beverly Lodge. To locate the purchase required some time; an unusual optimism must have been required to restore its owner's equilibrium.

But the redoubtable "Pipes" was present and he instantly saw the house which the real estate agent had said was there and which he himself said was "a pigsty stuck in mud." Possibly he even then made his plans, conceived a residence wherein he would write, badger his contemporaries, and perpetrate upon a world ripe to receive them his own literary masterworks. Meanwhile "Pipes" assigned Massett to earn their living in the law office of Doyle, Barber and Boyd, where he remained in obscurity the next two years. "Pipes" may also

have remodeled and raised his house, for some observers of the epoch contend that it rested on stilts, with a ladder which could be drawn up inside by means of a trap-door, thus prohibiting visitors when the occasion warranted, or in it's master's absence discouraging housebreakers.

There are other chroniclers who contend that Pipesville was never a retreat of solitude, but a bachelor's quarters shared by three other occupants, the actors Edwin Booth and Dave Anderson, and one Charley Tippett, a scene-shifter or handyman around the theatre. In this case it could not have remained a ten-by-twelve apartment, as Pipes contended. But whatever it was, however arranged and inhabited, there is one certainty into which all conflicting statements dissolve: hoisted above the roof, on a flag, was the word "Pipesville," inscribed in the florid style that distinguished all of its author's doings.

San Francisco during the fifties had expanded in girth. It had at least two outlying settlements, one at Pipesville, near the site of the present United States Post Office, 7th and Mission Streets, another at Mission Dolores, and the turbulent life of the Plaza overflowed at will. Likely enough some licenticusness occurred in haunts far remote from the Bella Union, and other establishments of its kind. George E. Barnes, writing in the Evening Bulletin, June 6, 1896, declared:

> "With Charley Tippett, Stephen C. Massett and Dave Anderson, young Booth kept bachelor's

> hall at a place out on the Mission Road called Pipesville. . . . The orgies that took place in that tip-tilted dwelling can be better imagined than described, when the license of the times is taken into account."

Despite the insinuation, Jeems Pipes settled down, like a country gentleman, and wrote at intervals his "friendly chit-chat" for the Pioneer Magazine, to which he was an early and regular contributor. There is evidence that he published in various other journals during these years and that editors generally thought well of him as a writer and commentator.

LITERARY FRIENDS

Among his literary friends was Charles Warren Stoddard, with whom he frequently dined and who judged him "a delightful friend, a famous diner-out." One can imagine him tramping home from town after dining out and attending the opera; or riding home in the omnibus that clattered every half hour along the straight and narrow road cut through acres of chaparral, thickets of green live oaks, and lonely and forbidding dunes of sand. One afternoon he was met by the editor of The Pioneer. It was right after Madame Anna Thillon had made her first appearance at the Metropolitan and their conversation naturally turned on that fact. The Pioneer of January 1854, in recording this incident, cited Pipes "our waggish wit, proving that all the critics are not yet dead," then reported his opinion as follows:

> "Well," Pipes inquired," "did you go to the opera last night?"
>
> "Yes."
>
> "And how did you like Madame Anna?"
>
> "Well, to tell the truth, after all that I had heard of her I was a little disappointed."
>
> "Ah, indeed? She's a charming person, though...." Pipes hesitated, charging his next words with a peculiar inflection. "Perfectly fascinating -- carries a man away with her -- makes up in naivete what she lacks in 'spizerinktum.'"

Whatever the truth about Pipesville, it at least added lustre to Massett's association with San Francisco and gave rise to an interesting mythology. Later a deed to this property, somewhat elaborately drawn, was published at length in the newspaper under the caption, Abstract of Title. But even this flourish was no signal that Pipes had become a permanent citizen.

HARD TIMES

In the general panic of 1855 Massett was rendered penniless by the closing of one of the Montgomery Street banks. A friend suggested that he present a concert at the time Pipes was writing for the Golden Era, so he very cordially enlightened his public with the composition of two songs: "You're all the World to Me" and "Clear the Way." Meanwhile, with such co-operation, Massett himself went about planning the concert. Its success, at a period when the theatre was aglow with rational improvements, ablaze with

glittering names, afire with abundant vitality, was once again assured only by that small following which was Massett's own. The group supported their idol to the limit, many purchasing as high as $50 worth of tickets, each.

Haphazardly, a chance hurdy-gurdy had ground out seductive tunes; money jingled in pockets lately empty, replenished now from the unfathomable cornucopia. Some such singular stroke had already sent Mrs. Crabtree, with Lotta, into the provinces, and others not yet counted were to follow, among them young Edwin Booth and Massett. A covenant may have been arranged between the man and his Boswell, each may have submitted to compromise, with various promissory rewards as the outcome. At any rate Jeems Pipes for a while retired, emancipating the nomad who at once took his biographer in a carpetbag and set out. In his other hand he carried a portable melodeon.

He traveled by water whenever possible and thereby avoided many of the hardships so inseparable from the experiences of most gold camp troupes -- so tragic in the case of Booth, when, stranded at Nevada City, he was forced in midwinter to walk all the way back to San Francisco. Massett's trip was even luxurious in contrast to the mode of Lotta, that bizarre child who slept while riding muleback, at night, from camp to camp, often across precipitous trails. In this as in most other manifest attitudes Massett had but slight fraternity with theatrical people of his time. He was never

as rigorously tried, although he passed through a proving-ground identified with a few of those whose names have illuminated history. Nor did he engage in the bitter turmoil of the early California theatre, in its fierce competition, in its desperate personal struggles. Yet, during his tour of the northern mines, which led ultimately to the Columbia River, into the outposts of Oregon, he was indisputably one of the troupers, perhaps a minor character with the augury of a major destiny.

He stopped first at Sacramento, now somewhat more civilized than when he had last visited it, more substantial in appearance, more dignified in outlook. His concert at Rev. Benton's church was attended by the leading citizens and their ladies. The Sacramento Union next morning cheered him on his way with a half column of laudatory prose. Thence northward, pausing briefly at camps en route, he came to Oroville. "A dismal looking mining town, but rich with the 'gold that perisheth,' a few wooden houses, innumerable tents, any quantity of lawyers, hotels made of canvas, streets knee-deep in mud, bars innumerable, and of course a theatre--called the American." It was here that he encountered one of the era's curiosities known as the "Pike," a name applied to that group of illiterates who had emigrated from Pike County, Missouri. He says, in Drifting About:

> My hotel, if such it could be called, was located immediately in front of the Temple of Thespis, and accordingly I could watch the pulse of the public pretty well, without being diskivered

> (sic), or subjecting myself to the vulgar gaze of "Pike," a very peculiar institution in those days....
>
> A couple of these worthies, I noticed from the windows of the tavern, were reading the poster on the door of the theatre, and as I thought I could quietly walk by and hear their views, without being spotted as the unfortunate showman, I crossed over the way,as though accidently strolling by, when Pike No. 1 relieved himself as follows: "What in thunder's a 'Ballad Consart?'"
>
> Pike 2. "Wal -- aguess it's a 'kinder show', and play acting."
>
> Pike 1. "By Jeems Pipes of Pikesville. Whar's Pikesville, I wonder?"
>
> "Well -- guess we'll have to go -- tickets two dollars. By golly -- he'd ben glad to get a shilling in Missouri!"
>
> With this comforting consideration I returned to my quarters to ruminate upon my chances of success in the evening.

As if this were an omen, Massett's melodeon failed while he was singing the initial number, a pathetic rendition of his song "When the Moon on the Lake is Beaming." From the pit came shouts of derision, accompanied by epithets and the words "Dry up!" This of course he did not do, in the interests of both his art and the tradition of the theatre; but although completed finally, the entertainment proved farcical in effect. The audience must have been unimpressed for there were no sentimental ladies present whose tears might have been expected to melt the indifference of those callous souls who filled the pit and spoke their opinions baldly. On the whole he was glad to leave Oroville behind him.

Traveling under a cloud of disappointment, Massett came to Grass Valley. Mrs. Crabtree was there, resigned to a frugal existence, making ends meet as best she could as mistress of a boarding house, cherishing an ambition for the rise of Lotta and keeping the child under passionate protective surveillance. And Lola Montez was there, a grand lady charmingly established in her picturesque villa, with a bear in attendance, several dogs, cats, parrots, about the premises, an almost interminable procession of notables flocking in and out. Massett was welcomed to the villa by Lola herself who took everybody into her cult. It is possible he saw Lola dance before a brilliant assemblage; equally possible that the ebullient "Pipes" came out of the carpetbag for a night and regaled everybody with stories. Thus gloom was dispatched, disappointment forgotten. With lighter heart, the wayfarer continued northward to Downieville, Shasta, Weaverville, crossing the Trinity Mountains to Yreka. This part of the tour seems to have been more pleasant; there were no further Pike incidents, no serious encounters with highwaymen, no failures of the melodeon. Moreover, it was profitable; so much so that he returned to San Francisco, obtained passage on a steamer and started for Oregon the following summer.

OREGON ODYSSEY

Sailing up the Columbia River, Massett was stirred by the beauty everywhere in evidence. Already he had seen the Bosphorus, the Rhine, the Rhone, the Hudson, but never

had he witnessed such grandeur of outlook as was here presented. In the distance were snow-crowned and majestic peaks: Mt. Hood and Mt. Rainier. These formed a kind of backdrop to the matchless and variegated colors of hillsides, plains, steep sloping river banks covered from base to top with stately fir. The river itself was a marvel, a gleaming pathway that brought him to frontier towns and a score of new experiences.

He visited Vancouver, Portland, Astoria, the last a flourishing little village twelve miles from the Columbia River mouth, and port of entry for the Territory. Here Massett introduced into his program a reading of William Cullen Bryant's "Thanatopsis." He went next to Oregon City, where he was forced to travel by land in his expectation of visiting the interior. At Salem, whither he had arrived by horseback after several ludicrous adventures, he gave a concert in the courthouse, lighted by six tallow candles -- all of which were extinguished by wind just as he was in the midst of singing "The Light of ~~Other~~ Days."

Next he stopped at Albany, a city of seventy-five inhabitants, but without a single building, hall, auditorium, or even a barn, in which to perform, and he was obliged to move on to Corvallis. This town he found quite hospitable, full of activity, with innumerable good fellows who welcomed him after the fashion of kings. At the end of his performance he had to shake hands with half the population before they

would let him depart.

Retracing his way to Vancouver, then to Portland and San Francisco, he prepared at once for a voyage to Australia, long since projected in his plans.

Then the thread which had borne Massett's impress through a pageant-tapestry of the most colorful epoch in California was abruptly severed; and fate left there a dangling end which had never been retied or satisfactorily tucked out of sight. In a kind of preternatural existence, willy-nilly like all of Jeems Pipes' exploits, this incredible man survived an interlude that by ordinary fatality would have been the last of him. One explanation of the fact may be contained in the concluding lines of an article which appeared in the True Californian on October 8, 1856, the day of his departure for Australia:

> "Farewell, inimitable Jeems; and when across the broad Pacific if the cacoethes scribendi should ever seize upon you, remember that the columns of the True Californian are always open to the lucubrations of 'Jeems Pipes of Pipesville.'"

AUSTRALIAN INTERLUDE

His next wanderings are reminiscent of the tour of Europe he had made in 1852; but now instead of sightseeing it was theatrical barnstorming. Through Australia his journeys and ambition traversed the mines, bringing into astonishing parallel the life of two widely separated "gold coasts." His sallies never seem to have been tempered with very great

wisdom, but luck was perpetually hovering about -- either in the box office or in the person of some friendly sponsor. At Melbourne he crossed the path of George Loder and Anna Bishop, whose brilliance, in the popular notion, must have transcended his own. Nevertheless his concert at the Mechanics Institute drew forth polite and condescending social lions in larger numbers than had attended similar concerts in some time. And all the newspapers applauded, even the Argus, a much dreaded arbiter in matters of the theatre.

He repeated the performance before leaving Melbourne, although besides Anna Bishop, there were Henry Sedley, Mrs. Sinclair and McKean Buchanan, playing at various showhouses. He went to Adelaide and Sidney, into the provinces, visiting nearly every mining camp of importance: Geelong, Ballarat, Creswick Creek, Maryboro, a city of tents and Dunolly, not unlike California camps in appearance. Everywhere it was the same repertoire: songs, recitative, comic imitations, burlesque. By stagecoach he traveled over dusty stifling roads in December heat, acting as his own publicity agent, posting the announcements himself, forever active. Often his audiences were rough-looking, bearded men, ill at ease perhaps, at a "Grand Ballad Concert and Readings." But he went through his bag of tricks, vanished, turned up later in some other town, like an undaunted Jack-in-the-box. He visited Tasmania; thence by way of the East Indies, Bombay and Calcutta.

TOUR OF BRITISH DOMINIONS

Everywhere he fell in with the best society, either through chance renewal of old friendships or by means of letters of introduction. His pockets must have bulged with such letters. If it were not His Excellency, The Governor, Sir Henry Edward Fox, under whose patronage a concert was inaugurated, then it was the Count Lionel de Moreton Chabrillon at whose chateau he was lavishly entertained. Not always a governor or count received him, but frequently some personage in military and civil affairs, perhaps a general on his aide-de-camp; a consular official; a viceroy of the king; or a prince regent of commerce. At Bombay he witnessed from behind authority's seat the inception of a plot to overthrow the government; the apprehension, trial, subsequent execution of six political prisoners, the fomenters, who were shot to death from the mouths of cannon. That same night, programs and bills having been distributed throughout the city three days before, Massett made his debut before a large, enthusiastic and motley audience at the Town Hall, changing his shirt three times during the course of the entertainment.

MASSETT ON DICKENS

After a brief sojourn at Calcutta, he traveled through Suez to Cairo and Alexandria, stopping to pay casual homage to the Sphinx of Egypt and the great pyramids. Then from Alexandria he went by steamship to Southampton and

afterwards to London, where he renewed in 1857 his inevitable associations with literature at the Garrick Club and attended Charles Dickens's first "Reading" at St. Martin's Hall. And here Jeems Pipes became an open-mouthed listener:

> "I went with some friends at least an hour before it commenced and had the greatest dificulty in elbowing my way into the room. . . . Mr. Dickens was at this date about forty-six. His hair was of an iron grey color, he wore a pretty full beard, a sort of goatee; he had a very white waistcoat, and a very large bouquet attached to the left lapel of a black dress coat. After adjusting the lamps on either side of him, and not once looking at the audience, or in the slightest degree acknowledging the storm of applause with which upon his entrance he was greeted . . . he commenced to read his celebrated Christmas Carol.
>
> Dickens, without any exception, is the finest 'reader' I have ever heard; there is nothing of stereotyped gesticulation, intonation, or attitudinizing of your professed elocutionist.
>
> Laughter and sobbings alternately rewarded his efforts, and when you take into consideration that there were over 400 pounds in the house, it will be perceived that the whole affair must have been to him highly satisfactory."

HARROWING EXPERIENCE IN LONDON

Although Massett himself had become considerably richer as the result of his tour in the British dominions, he still had not won the confidence of the London public, which he considered the most difficult in the world to please. He had already presented himself before an undemonstrative Southampton audience and anticipated a cool reception in the metropolis. But he was totally unprepared for the panic with which he was received at Hanover Square Rooms the night of

March 8, 1858. Tickets had been most lavishly strewn in all directions -- to the press, to leading literary men, to anyone in fact whose presence might be supposed to lend the affair favorable publicity. Too many tickets had been issued. Confusion overwhelmed the packed room as Massett began his introductory address. One voice in pandemonium, his was silenced by the screams of fainting women, shouting men, crying children. Amid cries of "order", "shame", "put 'em out", "sit down", "we've got no seats", "humbug", he was forced to retire until a semblance of quiet had been restored.

Ten minutes afterward, returning to the platform, he was greeted with stone-like attention which developed into horror when he recited an account of the revolt he had witnessed in India, with its terrible consequences to the six chief conspirators. And when his Sepoy servant handed round for individual inspection the sword used by an Englishwoman at Cawnpore in defending herself against mutineers, a second turmoil ensued and nearly terminated the program. This was enough to discourage even the 'Captain Cook of Troubadours.' He left London, his birthplace, without ever again attempting to make his way into the favor of the world's "most critical public" -- perhaps secretly envying the success of Dickens whose readings became a source of annual income well in excess of ten thousand pounds.

MEETING WITH IRVING, LONGFELLOW

In the summer of '58, at New York, Jeems Pipes was

allowed another emanation and forthwith commenced his most significent ascendancy. He exercised his prerogatives now like a regent. On the stage each of Massett's appearances had begun to acquire a distinct Pipeian flavor which was shown on the announcements: "Song and Chit-chat of Travels in Many Lands."

Unmindful of his London defeat, the itinerant moved once more, from New York to Brooklyn, Newark, Philadelphia, Hartford, Boston, and as far south as New Orleans. At intervals he found time to invade the dignified sanctuaries of literature, builded at New England and on the Hudson. Visited Tarrytown -- Irvington, the estate of Washington Irving, whom he met thus informally after a short acquaintance. He sat in the library of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, talking with the poet who occupied George Washington's former mansion at Cambridge. And of course he paid his respects to "Undercliff", where General George P. Morris, his friend, lived.

BACK TO SAN FRANCISCO

The next year, in October, Massett made a journey to San Francisco, perhaps out of fondness for his own estate, perhaps to impress upon memory its condition of decadence, but certainly to dispose of it. He remained only four months, then returned to the city of his first desire and adoption, New York. Now, for an indefinite time, he went into retirement while his alter ego wrote the book which he had conceived some years before, while wandering.

Little is surely known of what transpired during the subsequence. It may be that Pipes decided to write another book and that a perpetual antagonism arose between the man and his other self as to whether self-expression should remain theatrical or literary and whether it should be in command of one or both. Although recent concert tours had made possible the accumulation of nearly four thousand dollars, there may have been depredations to consider and wrangle about. The only authoritative statement (one which lends support to the initial inference) was made by Pipes at the conclusion of his reminiscences:

> "If, however, the public desires to know anything of my future peregrinations or 'doings,' they can be fully enlightened by addressing, post-paid, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas H. Landon, Post Office, Harlem, New York; or at my publishers."

Thus, by a tacit admission, the California episode was politely closed. An irrevocable conclusion seems likewise to have been written upon Pipesville.

READINGS IN JAPAN

However, the darkness which during these years had enveloped the erstwhile Lord of Pipesville was illuminated with sudden and rather spectacular consequence in the spring of '68, when the following item appeared in The Spirit of the Times, a New York journal to which he had often contributed:

> "February 15.
> Jeems Pipes -- sometimes distantly addressed as Stephen Massett -- suddenly vanished from

> our city one day -- rent day possibly -- and suddenly popped up, like a diver or Jack-in-the-box, in Japan, where he announced himself for a reading. 'Beautiful Snow,' 'The Vagabond,' selections from 'Drifting, etc., comprised the entertainment -- Tickets $3.00 About 500 present."

Massett was then forty-eight. There still remained some thirty years of active, perhaps robust living, until his death, August 20, 1898. He doubtless continued to appear on the stage at intervals and to write his monologues of "chit-chat." But these years are not clearly accounted for, and perhaps a logical substitution for their account here would be an estimate of the book, Drifting About.

Observers, contemporary and present, often distinguish the person who inaugurated San Francisco theatricals from the person who entertained with his writings. Steve Massett was the hero of a diverse peregrination in time and place and fancy, recorded by Jeems Pipes. In the hands of a father-confessor somewhat too ingenuous, this hero is frequently reduced to unheroic measurement, given all the foibles, sentiments, motives, desires, of every human being, but with a better than average attendance of luck. The autobiography, therefore, offers much evidence by which its central figure and author may be judged.

CRITICAL ESTIMATE

Plainly, Massett was a quixotic knight of the theatre, so in accord with the times that he is both enigma and paradox when viewed on the romantic plane which he fre-

quently occupied with Pipe's permission. But he was never above mediocrity of stature in importance or accomplishment-- never greater than uncounted thousands, equally talented, whose names are entirely forgotten. He was more fortunate than these inasmuch as he possessed that strange faculty for crowding towards the center of events, and forming invaluable friendships. His vestiges of song, rhyme, prosy monologues from the pen of Pipes -- a kind of lesser testament -- reveal nothing of genius and only an indifferent facility of imitation. One of his pieces, "To ----", emulating the familiar cadences of Byron, and published in The Pioneer Magazine of Feb. 1854, exemplifies the kind of thing his reputation subsisted upon.*

On the stage, as a realist, Massett was a much more capable artist. He specialized in mimicry, converting to his own advantage everything he had seen and done. Again he was fortunate because he had experienced sensations more than the general course of man allows; he had been to strange places, he was able to bring ubiquity, so to speak, into finite perception at a moment when it was most welcome to an audience suffering isolation, boredom, or ennui. His singing, by all odds, was hardly comparable to the best. If he was an artist of burlesque, it was because he embodied farcical elements in his nature, in most things he did apart from the stage as

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*See Appendix

well as on it. Thus, roaming about California, he gathered unto himself a nebulous fame, becoming the idol of an inconsiderable group who acclaimed his genius as a "poet," "song and dance artist," "actor," "essayist."

In actuality, as Pipes reveals him, he was a plain man somewhat awed by his own doings; often he was timid, unsure of himself. At other times, praised to excess, he was inflated with self-importance, pomposity. But always he was the individual who follows a willy-nilly method towards success, conniving at stern discipline and consorting with providence, or the people who order its dispensation. Only on the "gold coast," during its flamboyant interlude of '49, could such an actor have left his impression on the diminishing sands. Today he is looked upon as a curiosity, like those Pike County Missourians whom he encountered.

So much for the lesser testament.

In an introduction to the book, Drifting About, Jeems Pipes wrote the greater testament -- a piece which has since become a monument of auctorial errantry, a character-compendium of the satyr who inhabited Pipesville.*

If one can ascribe a positive character to the whole work, it is this: The author followed dictates of whim rather than literature. In it he recounted the tale of Steve Massett's wandering minstrelsy, most often looking down upon

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*See Appendix

the hero as a king might look down upon his court-jester with amused tolerance, with a kind of fraternity that borders on kinship but never convincingly becomes such. He made Massett ridiculous when the occasion warranted. He laughed at him, sparing all restraint; frequently he invented lavish effects to heighten the risibility, which became then not quite plausible -- even as a second-rate edition of Don Quixote.

The narrative is looped around a thread as vagrant as Pipes himself. It is written in florid prose, verging upon outright pedantry and digressing at will, as if some wisp-like creature, blown about by breezes, had held the pen. The best passages are an imitation of Dickens, sustaining Pickwickian characters, episodes, moods, with a scattering of Old world sensations; the worst passages constitute a mockery of the author's own attempt at writing. Too often, beset by helplessness, he is guilty of merely transcribing Massett's notes, an affectation which nullifies the book's consistency, muddles its style, confuses its sequence. But its chief fault, from an autobiographical viewpoint, is the absence of clarity. There is too much laborious reading in the search for a salient fact buried amidst trivialities and irrelevancies. Today such a book would not merit publication nor the consideration of being read.

Nevertheless, Pipes has written a masterpiece of solecism that stands in spite of itself, with legions of books better made by authors undoubtedly his superiors in

craftsmanship. It will endure, apart from Massett, because it likewise is a curio in its own right -- a specimen for historical scrutiny. It connects Massett, unequivocally, with the city of San Francisco, although he was a professed citizen of New York, where he spent a far longer time; and this fact alone is provender to the enquiring mind. It tells Massett's story and conducts him beyond the pale of living in a manner not wholly credible. But the story's genesis was equally uncertain and its conclusion, by such similitude may be judged proper.

Thus, the autobiography has become a cenotaph to the showman, a tower to its author: one curiosity prefigured with the other like reflections cast upon water, almost merging. It may be that Pipes retained control of their destiny to the last and contrived Massett's decline according to his own preconceived notion, until, a larger fatality came between and separated them. The mortal man died, leaving his image; but the mythical mayor, Jeems Pipes of Pipesville, is deathless beside this image -- a Don Quixote of letters who perhaps finds such unique perpetuation not quite to his liking, so distant it is from that he dreamed in the corridors of fame.

STEPHEN MASSETT, ESQ.
"JEEMES PIPES OF PIPESVILLE."

A portrait-gallery purporting to embrace the "men of the times," would be singularly incomplete, if it failed to contain a record of an individual so much talked of, so adventurous and accomplished, as Mr. Stephen Massett, more endearingly known as Jeemes Pipes of Pipesville," vocalist, composer, elocutionist, lecturer, rhymer, editor, traveller, man of letters and good fellow to boot. The accompanying head was prepared and engraved for us by Pierce, and is considered a good likeness of Mr. Massett when he "holds still," for such is the Protean facility of expression that we dare say he could sit for a gallery of portraits, and they would all differ as much from each other as the likeness of General Taylor. Mr. Massett is an Englishman by birth, but has become thoroughly Americanized by a long residence in the United States. Of his earlier years there is no record that would prove interesting to our readers. We believe that he first appeared as a vocalist in 1842, at Charleston, S. C., at one of the Seguins' concerts, and at once became a favorite with the public. He also sung in the same city at the concerts given by Mr. John Sinclair, so well remembered here, whose praises and judicious instructions stimulated and improved our youthful vocalist. His favorite songs were, "As I view now those scenes so charming," from the Sonnambula, the "Light of other days," "Black-eyed Susan," and "O, would I were a boy again," in which he was invariably encored. At Charleston he composed his famous song, "When the Moon on the Lake is beaming," of which fifty thousand copies have been sold without exhausting its popularity or the demand for it at the music stores. From Charleston Mr. Massett came to New York and appeared on the stage as the Conot in Rooke's opera of "Amilie," which had a run of sixty nights. He was received with the highest favor by the public and the press. Then as now, he charmed his audiences by the beauty of his voice and the power of expression which characterized his songs. We next find him travelling through New England with "Yankee Hill," whom he assisted in his popular entertainments. In 1843 "a truant disposition" led him to visit the East, and his letters describing the Greek and Turkish cities he visited, were published in the New York "Spirit of the Times," over the since famous signature of "Jeemes Pipes of Pipesville." In 1844 he appeared as the "Wizard," in James O. Maeder's opera of the "Peri," produced at the Maloleon in this city. It will be remembered that his success was complete. Signor de Begnis, at whose concerts he also sung with success, urged him to go to Italy and study music, assuring him that he possessed a fortune in his voice. But about this time he turned his attention to another career, and commenced the study of law in the office of James T. Brady of New York. The gold fever of 1849, however, found him swept away by the tide that set to California, and, in April, 1849, he landed in San Francisco. He was soon afterwards appointed a notary public by the acting governor of the territory, and also administered justice as an "alcalde." In June, 1849, he gave his first concert in California, in San Francisco, without any assistance, filling the old school-house in Portsmouth Square, and putting five hundred dollars into his purse by the operation. We next find him engaged in business in Sacramento, but when Herz, the pianist, visited California, he accepted of an offer of $200 a night to sing at his concerts. We next find him one of the editors and proprietors of the Marysville Herald. He left California in 1852, for New York, and thence sailed for Europe, in 1853, making an extensive tour through Great Britain and the continent. His observations and experiences were related in a series of brilliant and entertaining letters in the "Spirit of the Times." "Jeemes Pipes of Pipesville's" name attached to an article, was sure to give it currency. In 1853 he revisited California, where he remained till 1856, when he departed for Australia, where, as in Tasmania, he gave his charming entertainments, consisting of songs, recitations, imitations, narratives of adventures, etc., reaping a golden harvest, and establishing an enviable reputation in public and in private. Mr. Massett next appears, giving concerts and readings in Bombay and Calcutta with great success. But his projected tour through India was cut short by the mutiny, some thrilling scenes of which such as the blowing of rebel Sepoys from the guns, he personally witnessed. From Calcutta he went to England by the overland route, and in London and other cities of Great Britain, met with the most brilliant success with his "Reminiscences of Travel." Since his return to this country, his entertainments in New York, Boston and other cities, have proved a series of triumphs. The high character of his performances, the varied accomplishments of the performer, his humor and pathos, the strangeness of the adventures he relates, the blending of wit and sentiment, music and elocution in his entertainments, the absence of all theatrical adjuncts, combine to give them an attraction for a tastes, while the most rigid moralist can find nothing to censure. In the broad field which this country opens to a man of talent, a universal favorite like Mr. Massett, is sure of the most complete and honorable success.

STEPHEN MASSETT, ESQ.

TANK AND TEMPLE OF THE SIKHS.

The brilliant oriental picture below, is striking in architectural and natural beauty. Umritsir, the religious capital of the Sikh people, was first constituted a holy city by Arjoon, fourth Gooroo, at the end of the sixteenth century; but it was not till the Sikh power had reached its zenith under Runjeet Singh that the buildings which surround its sacred tank were completed in their present state. It was before that time, however, a place of great resort for the Sarbat Khalsa, or whole Sikh people, after they had risen to political importance by their conquests, and where, before they were united in submission to a single chief, they used to meet for consultation at least once a year at the festival of Rama when the cessation of the rains made military operations practicable; for though every Sikh was free and each was a substantive member of their commonwealth, yet it was soon found that all could not lead, and it was hoped that the performance of religious duties and the awe inspired by so holy a place might cause selfishness to yield to a regard for the general welfare; and the assembly of chiefs was called a "Goorumeeta," to denote that, in conformity with Govindo injunction, they sought wisdom and unanimity of counsel from their teacher and the book of his word. During the contests with the Mohammedans for supremacy in the Punjaub, Umritsir was several times taken, and its holy places defiled; but Runjeet Singh took ample revenge, when he undertook the rebuilding of the temple, by carvings of the white marble pinnacles from the Pádshahi Mosjid at Lahore, and also rifling the tomb of Jehangheesi, as the same place, of all its beautiful inlaid work. It now adorns the lower part of this brilliant temple, the upper story of which is of copper gilt: the causeway leading to it is also of inlaid white marble from the same sources. With the crowds of worshippers, the gay dresses of the women, the groups of the bathers, devotees and other singular attendants, altogether it forms one of the most striking and picturesque scenes in the whole of the British Indian empire.

STEPHEN C. MASSETT

Representative Parts Taken by Massett.

Date	Role	Play
1837.	Richard III (amateur performance)	Richard III
1841.	McStuart	Rob Roy
	A male peasant	Sonnambula (opera)
	Conradin	The Avenger
	Gaspard	The Lady of Lyons
	Guildencrantz	Hamlet
	Duke of Buckingham	Henry VI
	Cool	London Assurance
	Pistol	Merry Wives of Windsor
	Paris	Romeo and Juliet
1842.	Count Van Der Tiemer	Amilie (opera)
1844.	Razelcroft, the Wizard	Peri (opera)
1849.	Soloist -- impersonator	Ballad concert (first theatrical ever presented in San Francisco)
	Soloist	Joint recital with Henri Hertz.

1850. Solo concerts at Honolulu, San Francisco, Marysville

1856. Solo concerts at San Francisco, Sacramento, Northern mining camps and settlements in Oregon.

1857. Solo concerts at Australia, India, Arabia, Egypt.

1858. Solo concerts at London and Southampton, New York and Boston.

1859. Solo concerts at New York, Brooklyn, Philadephia, Charleston, New Orleans.

1868. Solo concerts in Orient -- Japan, China.

1869. Concerts, lectures at Salt Lake, Omaha, Chicago, N.Y.

STEPHEN C. MASSETT

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APPENDIX

(To give some idea of the style and subject matter of Steve Massett's writings, both in his book and in letters and verse published in magazines, the following is quoted):

DRIFTING ABOUT

Introduction.

By Stephen C. Massett

Beginning! That's the difficulty. In what form can I weave together the incidents of travel and adventure, the experiences and vicissitudes of my life for the last sixteen years?

Take a seat, my kind reader! Taste that wine. It's cheering and cheerful, isn't it? Light a cigar--or you--Miss or Madame--sip a little tea or coffee, imagine yourself, pray, in a position of entire repose, and listen while I recite what has happened to me "by field and by flood." I'll try not to bore you. The chapters shall be short--and we can pause when you choose.

I would like, above all things, to interest and amuse you. I will try to give advice worth nothing to those who may hereafter travel over the same lands I have journeyed through. I am told that the Spaniards have a proverb to the effect, that no man has accomplished anything who has not begotten a son, built a house, or written a book. Despite my numerous and persistent efforts to become a respectable married man, there is no such thing as filial affection for me, but I can boast of a noble, gorgeous, and architectural triumph, which is expressed in the musical word "Pipesville." You will find out all about that achievement if you keep me company. And now I proceed to gratify some one who exclaims, "Oh that mine enemy would write a book." It will have some marked peculiarities--it will not have particular "style"--because I know nothing about "style," except getting over several in my native country! There will be little of cohesion, and nothing of vanity in the composition. What I jot down may make some laugh, others weep, a few praise, many censure, but no one will be injured by hearing what I have to say.

I shall not rely much on fancy, Iam going to deal with facts, turn up or trump up what may-- funny or precocious, laughable or lugubrious, pithy or puffy, grave or gay.

Persons more than things, shall engage my attention.

Reader!--I mean to give you "chat," bald, disjointed chat--it may be, or chatter as some may complain. So put yourself at rest, hearken, be good-natured, let me shake your hand, exclaim "God bless you"--and then begin--

NOW THEN--

(A letter to Knickerbocker's Magazine)

Hotel d'Allmeyne, Rome, May 8, 1853.

"My dear Knick.:--At last the feet of Mr. Pipes have reached the seven or eight-hilled city, and from a capitally-furnished room, only six stories high, with a magnificent prospect, is he penning these few lines to you, a keind frend promising to mail it from London, as that will save you at least a hundred dollars postage, this bein' very deer in the Papal States. Now as I have seen and gazed at sum werry curious 'things' on this side of the worter, and have only a short space to report 'em in, I shall pick out a phew 'pipe-stems' for those of your Reeders who have done me the honor of glancing at my ill-spelled yarns. Fust of orl comes Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. In each of the cities and towns through which I have pass'd, I have seen in various languages, the announcement of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' for sale, and in two instances the name was spelled thus: 'Mistress, Harriet Beatcher Stove!' In Piedmont, I saw it akted, and the Italien who took the part of Uncle Tom affected the audience to tears, the women crying like sixty.

"My edication being sadly neglected in the 'Clásikál line,' when a young child, prevents my givin' you any very extended notis of this world renowned citty, or interesting anekdotes of Mr.

Caesar, Mr. Titus, Mr. Nero, or Pompey's Pillar, and the like; but a few of the 'things,' providing. I can spell 'em right, I will jot down. Among the foremost I would menshun 'The Colluseum,' where Biron used to lie on a stone, and right 'Child Harold.' It is in vast preservashun, though wonderfully goin' to ruin. I sor the place were the wild beastesses used to come up through a iron grateing, while Mr. Caesar and his family used to look on. SAINT PETERS is decidedly larger than our church in Barclay-street, take it orl round on an average; then, it has got a ball, so high that the bats can't fly up to it; whitch makes 'em very cross, they say. I sor the POPE, who is a very mild-looking gentleman, dressed in various colors. Peeple generally kiss his toe-- I disremember which one--but I didn't. He goes to Bed about eight bells, and gets up immediately before breakfast. I visited the late residence of Nero and Titus, still standing. Some of the fresko's, though painted three thousand years ago, are yet visible; they were done by various painters, such as VANDIKE ROOBINS, SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, MICHAEL ANGELO, TITMARSH, MORELAND, ELLIOTT, INMAN, and RAFFLE. I am not quite certain, but I think these are sum o' the names.

"Then I went to the VATIKAN--one thousand, four hundred rooms; sor statuary, mummies, (no daddys,) regular original ones, done up in linen; then I went to the theatre paid two pauls entrance, (ten cents English;) the play was 'Mary, Queen of Scots'; didn't understand a word of it, corse it wos hurried up in Italien. It appeared that Sir Walter Really got into a muss with Queen Elizabeth, but I an't quite certain. Then I went to the 'Pantheon,' or the 'Pantry' I forget which: this wos built twenty-five years B. C., and is still standing: there is a large hole at the top, which admits light and rain, sometimes both: I think they show you the pew St. Paul used to occupy, but I'm not quite sure. Then I went to the arch of Mr. Septimus Severious, carved all over in real stone; then to the Pyramid of Cayius Cestius; then to the arch of Constantine, and Temple of Vesta, where the first waistcoat was made; so they said, but I an't quite certain. I didn't see any regular, real Romans, like they used to be in the old times: they all wear tail coats, now, and patent-leather boots, and gold

shirt studs. I sor the Foram, but I don't think they were sitting; I an't quite certain. On my way to Rome, having to stop at Leghorn for two days, I took a run per Railroad to PISA, and went up the Leaning Tower; and I fully expected it would fall down every minit, bekorse I wos there, but I believe it is yet standing. Pisa is in Tuskany, or Tuscaloosa, I forget which.

"Yesterday, I sor a copy of the 'KNICKERBOCKER,' of last month or the month before, at the English Reeding Room of Mr. Piale, Number Seventy-Nine, Piazza di Spagna, and there were half-a-dozen 'Merikans waiting to get a sight at it. There was the nice blue cover, the pictur of 'OLD NICK,' in the easy chair, and in a moment, there came to me such 'pleasant memories' of the past, of 'chats' and mild 'brewings' 'now and then' in the sanctum, of sundry visits to Nassau-street, and the polite and gentlemanly Mr. H----, when a bright, fresh copy would be handed me; and pleasing indeed to me was the thought that I might soon meet you again!

"Trooly yours,
"James Pipes, of Pipesville."

WHEN THE MOON ON THE LAKE IS BEAMING

(Steve Massett's song that was so popular in his day)

When the Moon on the lake is beaming,
And the night is calm and still,
And the stars in their bright light gleaming,
Shine forth on some distant hill---
Wilt thou come, love come?
Oh, come with me,
And I'll give thee a happy home,
Where a true heart waits for thee!

When the vesper bells are ringing
Their evening melody,
Our maidens sweet are singing
Their simple minstrelsy---
Wilt thou come, love, come?
Oh, come with me,
And I'll give thee a happy home,
Where a true heart waits for thee!

(Typical verse by Massett
which appeared in The Pioneer,
Feb. 1854.)

To-----

By Jeems Pipes of Pipesville.

I.

My darling one! My darling one!
Could I but see thee now,
With that look of peerless beauty
That plays upon thy brow;
Could I but hear those dove-like tones
That from thy soft lips flow,
I think my life would be less full
Of bitterness and woe.

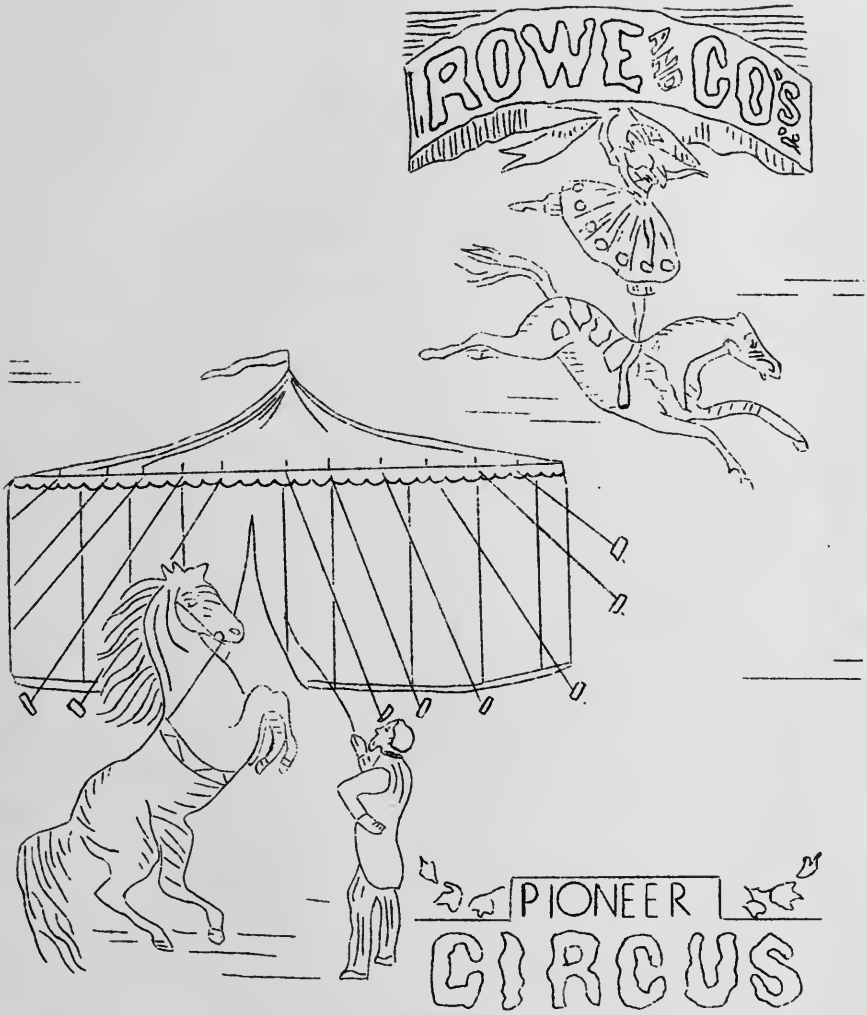
II.

Into the depths of those fond eyes
That seem to beam on me,
With all the truth of woman's love
And woman's constancy--
How often have I gazed and blest
The memory of that hour
When first my slumbering heart awoke
To the witchery of their power!

III.

My darling one! My darling one!
My life's last thot shall be
For one--for only one on earth--
And that one, whom but thee?
And when Death with his icy hand
Hath stopped this beating heart,
Think that in Heaven's own sunny land
We'll meet no more to part.

JOSEPH A. ROWE (1819 - 1887)



OF CALIFORNIA

Drawn from
woodcuts made by Rowe

ESTABLISHED IN 1849

JOSEPH ANDREW ROWE

Pioneer Circus Manager

Every American boy reared in the city had, at one time, an ambition to emulate the daring and the skill of riders on horseback whom he had seen in the circus or the movies or read about. And among the memories of every boy reared on the farms of America is that of doing stunts on horseback while driving the farm horse to water.

How often it must have been the ambition of boys to devote a lifetime to such a career and how often this ambition has been frustrated! But there was one boy who grew up and lived to spend all his days in the circus business, riding horses -- and not only one but three and four at a time --and won world-wide fame for his prowess.

He was Joseph Andrew Rowe, pioneer of the equestrian business in California, acclaimed by thousands of delighted spectators in this country, Cuba, the West Indies, South and Central America, Hawaii, the South Sea Islands, Australia and New Zealand as the premiere horseback performer of his time.

As a boy of eight or nine, Joe's principal pastime was standing on his hands against the side of a livery stable in the town where the village loafers and the boys congregated. He rode horses to water -- not in the accepted custom of straddling one and leading another by the reins -- but by standing up on the broad back of the liveliest

one, much to the mixed annoyance and concern of several old ladies who had been intimately acquainted with his parents and who in these days were often heard to mutter, "That boy will never come to any good."

BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

Joseph Andrew Rowe was born in Kingston, Lenoir County, North Carolina, sometime during the year 1819. His parents, who were quite well-to-do, died when Joe was eight years old. Thereafter, he found himself under the surveillance of a guardian who cared but little for his welfare, neglecting his education, and exerting no restraint on the young orphan who was left free to indulge in all sorts of escapades, tricks and antics.

In the year 1829, when Joe was but ten years old, a circus company owned by Asa T. Smith arrived in Kingston for a series of performances. The continual neglect and bad treatment young Rowe received from his guardians induced him to apply to Smith for a job. Smith, at that time, was anxiously searching for a boy daring enough and with plenty of energy who might develop into a good performer. He eagerly hired young Rowe, who fully qualified in every detail, under the stipulation that the contract was for four years, for Smith did not wish to lose the boy's services before he could capitalize on his years of training.

Immediately, Joe packed his belongings and the next morning mounted one of the baggage wagons and commenced his

career as a circus rider, where, after the various hardships accompaning novices in any field, he progressed splendidly for three years. During this period he learned how to break horses, to train and to ride them.

At the beginning of his fourth year under Smith, he found a stipulation in his agreement with which the circus owner had not complied, namely an education. He accused his employer of this and threatened to leave but this was forbidden him by law. For a year afterwards, until just before his four years by contract were terminated, poor Joe had to suffer for demanding his rights. Life for him in Asa T. Smith's circus was made more difficult in an effort to discipline him. In 1833, following their arrival in Baltimore, he applied through the manager of the company for a release, and one of the local courts granted him this belated justice.

AN INDEPENDENT STAR

Being a free lance now, he began to act for himself and being very proficient in his business, he applied to Joe Palmer, who had arrived in Baltimore shortly after Rowe's release from Smith, and was engaged. His popularity dates from this period. He was then traveling in the best company and soon acquired a reputation for daring and skill second to none. He improved greatly during his years of tutelage under Joe Palmer and under the kindness of this circus manager fulfilled his every obligation to the letter.

However, when the troupe arrived in Columbia, South

Carolina, Peter Coty, the equestrian manager, left the company for the purpose of starting his own enterprise. Coty recognized the value of Rowe to any circus, and immediately engaged him, paying him extra to assist in breaking his horses. Rowe remained with him during the season and then joined a caravan under the management of Buchard and Cranly, remaining with them till they reached Philadelphia.

Here he commenced an engagement with the well-known and justly celebrated circus of Buckley and Weeks, with whom he remained for an unprecedented period of two years. He wintered with them in 1835 and 1836 at the Lion Theatre in Boston, starting out with them in the traveling season of 1837, going as far as Providence, Rhode Island, where he left them. From there he went to New York to spend the summer in working out a plan of his own.

SOUTH AMERICA AND FAME

In company with the celebrated tightrope dancer, Mariano Perez, Rowe's project was to go to the island of Cuba with their own company. They invested what money they had in procuring horses to start an equestrian company to tour the island. It was Rowe's first effort in circus management and like all his previous engagements, very successful. After covering the entire island, he returned to New York.

On his return, he was approached by his former manager, Peter Coty, who wanted to repeat the success of the island tour. Rowe accepted this engagement under the

management of Coty and, with Perez, they proceeded to St. Thomas, West Indies, where the company played for two months, doing a land-office business. Their tour then took them to Caracas, Venezuela, where they stayed for some time. However, while here, Perez and Peter Coty found themselves in some disagreement and this difficulty caused the break-up of the company.

Again, Rowe and Perez teamed up as in their former Cuban tour and launched out in their own enterprise. They purchased a few native horses, broke and trained them, and remained in Caracas for three or four months, doing a better business than the old Coty troupe. The popularity of Rowe and Perez extended not only to the people of Venezuela but also to the President of the South American Republic. He, in turn, was so delighted with the performance that he not only visited their show constantly but also extended many favors to them.

One day he approached Rowe and insisted that the equestrian take his war horse, Paloma, and train him for the ring. Although the President was a great admirer of Rowe's type of entertainment and was particularly pleased with the docility and skill of his horses, he was as much surprised as the citizens when Paloma made his debut as a trick horse to the largest audience ever assembled in Caracas on the occasion of Rowe's benefit. The astonishment and the enthusiasm of the audience was well matched by the President, who

rewarded Rowe with a beautiful embroidered purse containing 60 ounces of gold and gave Rowe and Perez letters of introduction to various dignitaries throughout the republic, aiding them immensely in business matters regarding the itinerary of the tour.

When they left Venezuela for the island of Curacao, it was with much regret. From here, after a month's performance, they started for Cartagena, where they arrived in the fall of 1839. Here they formed partnership with the Matis family, celebrated rope dancers. They played to fair business for a short time and then embarked for Kingston, Jamaica. In Kingston they erected their own building and played for about four months. Finding business rather slack, they dissolved partnership with the Matis family and again started out on their own, visiting San Diego, Manzanillo, Bayamo, Porte Principe, Montego Bay, and Cuba.

NEW ORLEANS and the GULF COAST

Following the termination of the Cuban engagement, Rowe and Perez broke up their successful partnership amicably and Rowe embarked on the steamer Alabama for New Orleans. He arrived there in 1845 with two trick horses, Adonis and Mercury. He did not remain idle long, however, for he immediately associated himself with Durastius Rich, the proprietor of a small but good performing company. They played in and around the delta city for some time and then embarked for Key West in Florida and from there headed for New Providence

where they did a surprisingly good business.

Then for five weeks they were idle. Rowe's partner, Rich, returned to New Orleans and Rowe retraced his way again to Key West. The faculty for finding useful partners did not desert him, for here he became associated with a hard-working man named Whitby and the two, with their company, sailed for Matanzas, Cuba.

During his stay in Cuba which lasted for about eight months, Rowe bought his celebrated performing horse, Othello, and broke and trained him. At the end of this period, Rowe had become tired of Cuba but his partner, Whitby, desired to remain there and so they parted amicably. Rowe left for Curacoa. Remaining there but for a short time, he started for Maracaibo, Venezuela, no doubt lured on by the memories of the kindnesses extended to him during his first visit there with Perez.

He was not wrong. The enthusiasm and the friendship of the people had in no way diminished. Everywhere he went in the interior, they were delighted with his return. He spent the entire summer of 1846 in a tour of Venezuela and retraced his way to the coast, filled with fond remembrances of the hospitalities extended him by the generous inhabitants.

About September of this year, he arrived in Porto Cabello. Now his desire to see Central America led him to take his company to Santa Martha, New Granada.* But he was

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*New Granada was a Spanish viceroyalty which later became the Republics of Colombia and Panama.

not satisfied with this. He wanted to be the first to give an equestrian performance in the capital city, Bogota, so he proceeded up the Magdalena River. Here, his company was received with the usual delight and astonishment of the South American audiences.

His incessant desire to see this part of the Americas would allow him to stay but a short time in Bogota. He soon took his company to Quito, the capital of Ecuador and, remaining here only for a few performances, he immediately departed for Guayaquil, the seaport of the republic. In the meantime, however, while en route, they played in most of the intermediate villages, arriving in Guayaquil sometime in November of 1848.

Their stay of two months here was profitable, and so with no complaints but a slight feeling of regret at leaving such a remunerative locality, they packed and embarked on board an English mail steamer for Callao and Lima. Here they played constantly until the first of May 1849, when the great rush of travelers to the gold fields of California began flowing through Panama.

Rowe was not to be caught napping. He immediately packed up and transported his company to Panama. But here, a sad misfortune awaited them. Due to overcrowded, hectic conditions, a severe epidemic of cholera broke out among the gold seekers. Fortunately, the company was spared the ravages of this disease but performances suffered; they could not get an

audience. After vicissitudes and hardships, Rowe left Panama the last of August for San Francisco on the bark Tasso.

EMBARKING FOR SAN FRANCISCO

Although no mention of Rowe's marriage can be found up to this time, an incident occurring on board ship shows that he was married to a charming and generous wife. Subsequently, we find that she was an equestrienne of merit.

The ship was packed with refugees from cholera-stricken Panama and men on their way to California to seek for gold. The presence in their midst of a woman who nursed the fever-stricken, who brought cheer into the tedium of a long sea voyage, was more than appreciated by the passengers. As the ship neared their destination, the thankful passengers composed a letter:

> To Mrs. Rowe,
> On board the bark Tasso.
>
> At Sea, near San Francisco,
> October 2, 1849.
>
> Resolved: We, the undersigned, passengers from Panama to San Francisco, having heard and witnessed with pleasure, and some few of us thankfully experienced, the kind attention of Mrs. Rowe of the Circus Company, cabin passenger, during our tedious and protracted voyage, take this, the earliest opportunity (ere we arrive at, or separate from, that long-sought-for shore now so near, and whilst we congratulate each other, and thank the Lord, for our safe arrival) of returning our sincere acknowledgments and best thanks to that lady for her uniform and agreeable comportment to all on board, and more particularly for the sympathy manifested and timely relief occasionally rendered towards the few fever-stricken individuals, from her own slender sea store.

> In thus conveying to that amiable and truly tender-hearted woman, this small tribute of our esteem and thankfulness, we conceive it not departing from our duty as freeborn citizens, imbued with the laudable and philanthropic principle of giving merit its due meed of praise, especially under such circumstances when that precious gem is found ornamenting the mind and shining forth in its native Christian tenderness, from the female breast, but on the contrary, feel it to be our most pleasing duty, when considering that silence on our part might be, if not construed into criminality, imputed to bad taste, and calculated alike to weaken the fervor of a generous spirit, and so far injure others who may come within the sphere of her acquaintance in the future.
>
> And, therefore, feeling a manly sympathy for the departed, we hereby cordially concur in this public expression of our esteem, the desire and warm hope, that both Mrs. Rowe and husband may live long and happily together, free from the wants of this life, by sea and land, as also accidents, troubles and sickness, incidental to their profession and in the enjoyment of the rewards of their first pursuits, becoming even more prosperous daily.
>
> And in conclusion, we confidently trust that their company will receive that share of public patronage and support, at this new celebrated American settlement, San Francisco, and elsewhere, to which their abilities as equestrian performers so justly entitle them...

This letter was tendered to Mrs. Rowe, signed with the names of 74 passengers on board.

A little more than a week later the bark Tasso, under full sail, passed through the Narrows (now the Golden Gate) and arrived in San Francisco on the 12th of October, 1849. Here begins that portion of his life that has given him the title of "Pioneer of the Equestrian Business in California."

ESTABLISHED FIRST CIRCUS IN SAN FRANCISCO

Rowe was inactive for but a few days. On the 28th of October he gave the first circus entertainment in California at an amphitheatre located on the east side of Kearny Street between California and Sacramento Streets, where Commercial Street is now cut through. Under the name of "Rowe's Olympic Circus," the company consisted of Rowe, his wife, and Master Rafael, riders; William H. Foley, a clown; Signor and Signora Levero, rope dancers; Mr. Westcott, ringmaster; and two utility men named Stevens and Long.

The Alta California of Thursday, November 1, 1849 described the enthusiasm of the audience and the general appearance of the amphitheatre as follows:

> "San Franciscans have public amusement and a place of evening resort at length. Rowe's Olympic Circus opened on Monday evening last to a crowded audience and the performances gave ample satisfaction if we are to judge from the frequent and uproarious bursts of applause with which the varied entertainment was greeted.
>
> "The house has been plainly though comfortably fitted up and will conveniently seat from twelve to fifteen hundred persons. It consists of a pit and tier of boxes set apart and planned for the uninterrupted and full enjoyment of the sports of the ring and is, altogether, a place of amusement, arranged with a degree of comfort which we were quite unprepared to meet.
>
> "Mr. Rowe is a graceful and practised rider, and appears advantageously in the habiliments and in the exercise of his profession. Mr. Foley, albeit his legitimate sphere is that of a dashing rider, makes a very clever clown, and the company generally, though requiring practice, evince decided talent.

"Mrs. Rowe is a female equestrian of pleasing merit, and her appearance called forth warm applause. The performances on the corde elastique were truly excellent, and particularly have we to commend the fearlessness and grace of Senora Levero. The 'thunders of applause' with which her execution of most difficult feats was received, were indeed merited.

"Mr. Rowe has attained a high degree of excellence in the training of his horses. His favorite, 'Adonis,' is the very paragon of sagacity, obedience and docility. Seldom have we seen a more perfectly tutored animal.The pony 'Billy,' is another evidence of that remarkable proficiency in the education of a horse which skill, care and good treatment on the part of the master will accomplish.

"Mr. Rowe's circus entertainments will relieve the tedium of many an approaching long winter evening, and we congratulate our citizens on the establishment of a place of amusement in our midst under such favorable auspices."

With admission at $3 and drawing large audiences, the success of Rowe's Olympic Circus continued. In the meantime, however, William Foley quit the troupe for the reason, as he said, that he found it impossible to live on a salary of $1,200 a month.

LIVING EXPENSES IN '49

While it may seem incredible that a person could not live within an income of more than $1000 a month, a quick glance at the prices of a representative list of necessities of that day when a modest meal cost over $10.00, and other living costs were in proportion, may lend weight to Foley's claim.

Accounts in Zoeth Skinner Eldredge's History of

California, are enlightening; to sleep in a bunk or cot cost as high as $15.00 a night; rooms rented for from $200 to $300 a month, payable in advance; laundry cost $20.00 a dozen pieces regardless of size. Vegetables and fruit were costly luxuries, apples finding a ready market at $1.00 to $5.00 apiece. In the restaurants a boiled egg cost never less than a dollar; a small loaf of bread, such as sold in New York for four cents, cost fifty to seventy-five cents in San Francisco. The same price was paid for a pound of common cheese; and so on through all the necessaries of life. Foley's contention was not ridiculous after all.

On December 10, 1849, Dave Long, one of the original members of the company and, by now, a favorite clown, purchased an interest in Rowe's Olympic Circus. On the Thursday evening preceding the 29th of December, a benefit was held for Mrs. Rowe which was well attended, serving not only to gratify the feelings of the beneficiary but was also quite remunerative. Very soon after this, they closed at their amphitheatre and erected a stage where they planned to give dramatic performances in combination with circus entertainment.

ROWE TURNS TO DRAMA

Consequently, they opened on February 4, 1850 with a dramatic company composed of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, Mr. and Mrs. Batters, Mr. and Mrs. McCron, George Campbell, George Mitchell and an actor named Carleton. Their first presentation was Shakespeare's Othello with Carleton in the title

role and Hamilton as Iago. On the same bill was the first presentation of Bachelor's Buttons. The prices ran as follows: $3 for box seats, $2 for parquet and $5 for seats in private boxes.

For two months, from the opening with their dramatic company till late in March, the Rowe's Olympic Circus combined their circus entertainment with the legitimate drama. But the influence of clowns, performing horses, and the fresh, invigorating smell of sawdust had its effect on the drama.* The plays became more and more an opportunity for the circus company to inject spontaneous slapstick and stunts. Soon, in one of the legitimate plays, the entire circus company--clowns, acrobats, horsemen, and even the horses--crowded in; and like the Arab that let the camel put his head into his tent, the legitimate actors found themselves driven off the amphitheatre.

Featuring only straight circus performances now, the troupe gave a benefit for Rowe on the 18th of March. Three days later, there was a benefit for the partner, Dave Long, and on March 26, William Foley, the former star clown of the company, was also tendered a benefit performance. On April 4, the company hired a troupe of Mexican singers and dancers.

A surprising announcement was made on April 30. Rowe's Amphitheatre was purchased by William H. Foley! Until the building passed into the hands of the purchaser on May

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*See appendix.

16, the company experienced considerable success. Following that date, Foley occupied it for occasional bull-fights and a company of Spanish dancers until June 14 when the building was destroyed by fire. In September he opened at the Foley's California Amphitheatre on Portsmouth Square with a full troupe of equestrians and, as an additional feature, a company of dancers who had formerly appeared with Dr. "Yankee" Robinson at his Dramatic Museum. Along with the Llorentes, father, mother, and daughter, appeared Senor Arroyo and Mons. Rozette, a celebrated French gymnast and the famous Negro breakdown dancer, Lynn.

Foley went to another location where his company was known as the Olympic Circus, returning to his Amphitheatre in December. He spent more than $6,000 in repairs and alterations in this building and opened in time for the Christmas season with circus and dramatic entertainments. Following this, he closed for a few weeks and then reopened under the name, California Circus. He featured W. W. Nichols, an accomplished bareback rider.

During the month of February the former Foley's Amphitheatre was rented out for a masquerade ball one night, following which, a company of twelve Cherokee Indians played. The Evening Picayune of February 26, 1851, described them as having come

> ".....across the country to California and who have for several months past been in the mines. The program will consist of festival ceremonies, war dances, songs, etc., in costume. Several are sons of chiefs."

Rowe, who in the meantime had kept his company intact, had proceeded to Sacramento and there gave the first performance of its kind at the Pacific Theatre on May 2, 1850. He charged $5 for seats in private boxes, $3 for dress circle and parquet, and $2 for second tier seats.

After Rowe had performed in the City of Sacramento for three months, Samuel Brannan, a notable pioneer and patron of the theatre, began the erection of a large and commodious building for Rowe on Front Street between K and L Streets. During the process of building, Rowe, on August 14, returned to San Francisco and began the erection of a temporary building to be known as the "New Olympic Amphitheatre." This building, located in the rear of the Eureka Hotel on Montgomery Street between California and Sacramento Streets, was completed in a few weeks. He engaged the services of George Moore, a celebrated clown from the East, and began performances on August 14 with admission prices ranging from $4 for box seats to $1 for the pit. On September 12, a new French equestrian, Mons. Laborde Bonnefoi, was hired and appeared that night.

The Daily Alta California, September 24, 1850, gave this company a complimentary review, albeit a trifle confusing in its last sentence:

> "We are pleased to know that this well conducted place of amusement still continues to be attractive to the admirers of equestrian entertainments and the usual sports of the ring. Mr. Rowe strives hard to cater for the gratification of the public, and if they do not succeed, it

> is certainly not any fault of his. He is continually getting something new and offering varied performances every evening. But those who wish particularly to know more must obtain wisdom by experience."

Those familiar only with the criticisms of modern day journalists will find themselves amused by a comment made in the Evening Picayune on September 30:

> "Rowe's Olympic Circus is in Montgomery near California Street. Never having had an opportunity to visit this establishment, we cannot speak understandingly of its performance."

However, some two weeks later, on October 14, the critic of this paper corrected his oversight and, following a visit to the establishment on the occasion of Rowe's benefit, wrote as follows:

> "We are happy to say that Mr. Rowe's benefit came off with considerable eclat. The house was filled to overflowing by a select and attentive audience, thus giving satisfactory proofs that the merits of the indefatigable proprietor are not inappreciated. Several novelties were introduced, and received in a most flattering manner by the delighted audience.
>
> "The performance of Master Rafael is certainly the best of its kind that we have witnessed in this country and puts us very much in mind of young Ducrow, whose feats of horsemanship are associated with our boyish remembrances."

In the meantime, Samuel Brannan's building in Sacramento had been finished (October), but Rowe, finding the circus business in San Francisco so profitable, gave only a fortnight's entertainment in Sacramento. He returned to San Francisco and continued with unprecedented success until December 1850.

SOUTH SEAS AND THE ANTIPODES

Rowe's company had now become recognized as the best performing circus troupe on the continent. Rowe therefore reasoned that the only point in remaining here would be for the financial returns, and that alone was not what he wanted. He wanted new worlds to conquer, and if the new territories were not to be conquered, at least he wanted to see them. This rationalization served to cover up his inordinate wanderlust which he never lost.

His final decision was to sail for Australia via the Sandwich (Hawaiian) and Society Islands. To that end, he chartered and outfitted the schooner Leveret and sailed from San Francisco with his company in the spring of 1851 for Honolulu where they arrived after an uneventful voyage. They began performances within a week after their arrival. In the audience was King Kammehameha who was particularly pleased with the entertainment. Much to the satisfaction of the company, the enthusiastic natives attended in great numbers, the circus business in Hawaii being as profitable as it ever had been in the States. A deputation of Hawaiian citizens eventually called on Rowe, asking him to bring his company to Lahaina, a request which the company was more than eager to accept; they cheerfully complied. In Lahaina, they played to tremendous houses.

The schooner Leveret had returned to the States with a cargo but Rowe, finding the South Seas tour more

profitable than he had expected, bought the brig General Worth and left for Tahiti, Society Islands, on the 12th of December and arrived there in January, 1852. The impression was prevalent at that time that the inhabitants of these islands were cannibals. In the personal memoirs of Rowe, edited by Albert Dressler and entitled California's Pioneer Circus, this phase of the trip was described by Dressler as follows:

> "The cannibals greeted Rowe, his equestrian troupe and stud of ten horses graciously, and were quickly and successfuly charmed of their cares and cash. Seemingly, the cannibals were also beguiled of their appetite, as the company, after showing for a short while, embarked on their vessel and no one was reported missing. This was the first amphitheatrical group that ever took tribute from the Cannibal Islands."

But their good luck was not to last. Shortly after leaving Tahiti, the General Worth, when 100 miles east of Norfolk Island, was overtaken by the great gale of February 6, and sails and spars were torn off by the terrific wind. However, temporary repairs were made enroute and the ship continued on to Auckland, New Zealand, where they arrived on the 24th of March, 1852.

Money was scarce here, the citizens of Auckland being in an impoverished condition, so the troupe stayed but a short time, proceeding almost immediately for Melbourne, Australia. They arrived here on the first of May only to run into a series of annoying troubles due to commercial prejudice. The Mayor of Melbourne would not grant Rowe's

company a permit to perform as he was financially interested in one of the local theatres. However, the citizens of the town took the matter in their own hands, and, after six weeks of disappointing delay, they were given the satisfaction of erecting a building and giving the first circus entertainment in Australia. On the day of the opening the Melbourne paper, editorially supporting Rowe against the Mayor, gave the occasion much space. It is quoted by Dressler thus:

> "The A-1 Yankee-built clipper, Rowe, having escaped the dangerous rock Right Worshipful, and the frightfully obscure reef John Brown (can this be the Mayor?), has at lenth got into smooth water, and with the fair breeze of public support, calculates on speedily arriving at the Port of Remuneration. To drop the language of metaphor, this enterprising gentleman opens his place of amusement this evening with a bill of fare for the occasion, sufficient in itself to draw a bumper house, without the additional attraction of an opening night.
>
> "On Saturday we visited the circus, and were certainly struck with the elegance of its appearance, and the completeness of the arrangements for the accomodation of its visitors. The building which is capable of containing with ease 800 persons is divided into pit, boxes and dress-circle, the two latter being separated from the former by partitions, and approached by a separate entrance from the street. The dress-circle is situated on the top of an inclined flooring, rising from the ring, and is fitted up very tastefully with red and white hangings, the seats being arranged so as to afford abundance of room to the visitors.
>
> "In the center of the circle a box has been constructed for the especial use of the Lieutenant-Governor and suite. This is handsomely fitted up and is approached by a private staircase. The boxes are immediately below the dress-circle and do not materially differ in their accommodation. The orchestra is placed in a balcony immediately over the

entrance from the stables; but prior to the commencement of the performance a band will play outside the building, in a balcony over the entrance, which faces the junction of Stephen and Lonsdale Streets. There are several minor details of arrangement which our space will not permit us to enumerate; they all tend, however, to one object--the comfort and convenience of the public.

"We wish Mr. Rowe all success in his undertaking; and trust that tonight may be the commencement of a prosperous season, which will compensate him for all the loss, trouble and annoyance to which he has been so unnecessarily exposed."

The pages of the following day's paper were again filled with news about Rowe's company; this time quite legitimately for the opening night had been a sensational success. The Melbourne daily wrote:

"The opening of the circus recently erected by Mr. Rowe.....which took place last evening created no little sensation trhoughout the city. At an early hour of the day, so great was the demand for tickets that the proprietor, under the impression that the building would not comfortably accommodate more than 800 persons, was compelled to refuse supplying the numerous demands which were made upon him.

"The building, which has been erected at a cost of nearly 1,000 pounds, is about 260 feet in circumference; the ring in which the equestrian exhibitions take place is probably about 150...

"Prior to the doors being opened, the excellent Saxe Horn Band, whose services have been engaged for the season, enlivened the scene, and continued to do so at intervals through the evening. The building was crowded to suffocation upon the opening of the doors, notwithstanding which, the utmost good order prevailed through the entertainments.

"Of the amusements themselves, we cannot speak too highly. We were going to say that the efforts of Ducrow, Batty, and the exhibitions of

> the far famed Astley dwindled into insignificance when compared with those, which, through the enterprise of Mr. Rowe, have been provided for us; but, fearful of being charged with partiality, we will content ourselves by saying that they were fully equal to any which we have witnessed or which we have heard of being presented to the public in any quarter of the globe.
>
> "From the absence hitherto of anything like an ample supply of rational amusement in Melbourne, and the fact of the theatre being about to close for the season, we have no doubt that the spirited proprietor of the circus will reap a rich harvest, to which his exertions and enterprise in catering for the amusement of the public fully entitle him. Our only regret is, that upon the opening night so many hundreds of persons should have been compelled to go away, laboring under no little disappointment from being unable to obtain admission in consequence of the crowded state of the house."

The foresight in providing a private box for the Lieutenant-Governor was justified for, on Monday of the next week, His Excellency attended an afternoon matinee at the circus. This matinee was crowded with the elite of the social and diplomatic circles. Rowe made every possible preparation to do justice and fitting honor to the occasion and succeeded admirably for His Excellency expressed himself much gratified with the entertainment provided.

The performance in the afternoon introduced new and gorgeous gowns and trappings but did not differ materially from the usual evening show. Thereafter, however, the afternoon matinees continued, due to a pressing demand by the people who either traveled long distances to attend or were afraid of the night air.

The Melbourne Daily continued:

> "His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor, was so delighted with his recent visit to Mr. Rowe's circus that he has been pleased to intimate his intention of paying another visit during the present week. We are pleased to see entertainments of this nature conducted in such a manner that His Excellency and the better classes of society can patronize them.
>
> "On the present we are gratified on another ground, as His Excellency's presence has the effect of drawing a bumper house, of which Mr. Rowe, from his exertions in catering for public amusement and the creditable and orderly manner in which his establishment is conducted, is amply deserving."

On the following Monday evening, the American Circus, as Rowe's company was now called, was filled to capacity and hundreds were turned away at the door for lack of seats. Besides the great number that usually attended his shows, an additional crowd was drawn there to witness the presentation of a testimonial medal to Rowe by his business associates and members of the cast.

His Worship, the Mayor, who but a short time previously had done all that he could to forbid Melbourne to Rowe and his troupe, and several other prominent public officials calling themselves either public or private friends of Rowe, were present to witness the ceremony. Thomas Warner, a performer in the circus, presented the medal to Rowe with a neat and brief speech, informing the latter of their esteem and regard for him as a man and an employer. He also gave a description of the medal and its ornaments and expressed the wish that its presentation might stimulate other employers to

emulate Rowe's example in treatment of their employees. He ended by hoping that Rowe might live long to enjoy the gift.

The medal itself was described by the Australian paper as being

> ".....one of the neatest specimens of Colonial artistical skill, a memorial medal, intended for presentation to Mr. Rowe, the spirited proprietor of the American Circus, by the several parties in his employment, and, as far as we may be permitted to express an opinion, we believe Mr. Rowe richly merits such a testimony of esteem.
>
> "It is manufactured of pure Victorian gold, the artist being Mr. Drew, watchmaker and jeweler, Collins Street, East, and after the artist's own design. It weighs 10 ounces, is in the shape of a large shield-like medal and bears the following inscription: 'Presented to Joseph A. Rowe, Esq., of the American Circus, Melbourne, by his attaches as a token of esteem for him, as a man and an employer. August, 1853.'
>
> "The shield is encircled with laurel wreaths and on top figures the Australian aborigine, with his boomerang and spear, and coiling within a short distance, the kangaroo. Beneath the inscription stoops down in bold relief, Mr. Rowe's favorite horse, Adonis, taking some bread from his master's mouth, whilst Mr. Rowe lies on the ground in the part of the Indian chief. On the whole, we cannot express too much admiration for either the design or the work."

At the time of the presentation, Rowe and Warner stood on the stage in front of the orchestra, surrounded by members of the company in costumes in which they had appeared in the big act. After Rowe had made his reply, the medal was handed around by a member of the company to the audience for inspection. The performance on this night broke all records for the Australian engagement of this company

both in attendance and in gate receipts.

A few days later, Rowe took the net proceeds from this night and gave a check for 222 pounds to Alderman Nicholson for the benefit of the local hospital. The Melbourne paper, in writing of this incident, mentioned an interesting sidelight in connection with the conduct of the local audience. After describing the great crowd, it went on to say that

> ".....we were pleased to see that much better order was preserved than on any previous occasion. It certainly is not so much the fault of Mr. Rowe that disturbances occasionally take place as he has a strong body of police always in duty, whom he pays very liberally for their services. A little more activity on the part of these officials, and a little more determination on the part of the audience themselves in seeing decorum preserved, would eventually put a stop to the annoyance...."

From the day of his premiere in Melbourne his usual good fortune had returned. His two years in Australia was a continual succession of triumphs. He did the most unprecedented business of any circus manager living at this time, having the greatest financial success.

RETURN TO SAN FRANCISCO - A RICH MAN

Nevertheless, the wanderlust hit him again--this time, not for new countries, but for California where he had left so many friends. He wanted to share his success and enjoy it among them. So, Rowe, with over $100,000 in cash and numerous chests filled with valuable gifts, together with his now world-famous company, sailed from Melbourne in the early

spring of 1854. They arrived in San Francisco in spring of the following year after a tedious and uneventful passage in comparison with the harrowing experiences of 1852 on their route to Australia.

No sooner had the signal arm atop Telegraph Hill notified the inhabitants of San Francisco of the arrival of a vessel and hardly had the ship's anchor touched bottom till the news of his arrival was carried about the town via the grapevine system. His previous popularity in California was still remembered and his newly won fame in the countries Down Under had done nothing to minimize the enthusiasm of his California following. A large crowd assembled at the wharf to greet him and his famous company of entertainers with great delight and curiosity. The Rowes celebrated their homecoming by being hosts at a lavish banquet, at which time he was christened by popular acclaim, "Colonel," a title that he carried with him for the rest of his life.

Now Colonel Rowe and his wife felt themselves to be Californians. They decided to retire from the circus business and spend the rest of their days in peace and quiet as ordinary citizens. They settled their business affairs in San Francisco and then departed, much to the regret of their many friends here, for Southern California to establish a permanent home.

RETIREMENT FROM THE ARENA

On May 30, 1854, they purchased the Santa Anita,

one of California's finest ranchos, originally the property of a Spanish hidalgo. The purchase price, paid to Henry and Guadalupe Dalton, was $33,000.* Rowe made several other purchases in real estate at this time. From the Daltons, he also bought a tract of land for $7,000 in the city of Los Angeles, bordering the Los Angeles River. Other purchases were also made in that city. On June 1, 1854, he purchased lots for $10,000 from Manuel Garcias at the junction of Main and Spring Streets. On the same day he paid $2,500 to B. Jose for city lots, and on the following day bought city property in the same location worth $4,000 from Leonardo Cota.

Following these business deals, the Colonel and his wife lived on the rancho in a quiet and unassuming manner. On the surface, he must have seemed contented; but within himself, no doubt, there was a nostalgia for the thrills and excitement of circus life. The work of supervising this immense ranch, riding all day in the rejuvenating Southern California air, made him impatient for the more strenuous life of a circus proprietor.

UNREST. CALL OF THE SAWDUST

Returning to San Francisco early in 1856, Rowe began again the important task of assembling a new company. He took for his partner an unusually proficient circus manager

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*Santa Anita Rancho was comprised of about 10,000 acres at the time of Rowe's purchase. It now takes in the towns of Arcadia, Sierra Madre and part of Monrovia. Lucky Baldwin purchased the Santa Anita Rancho in the seventies for about $200,000.

named John Smith.*

Next, Rowe commissioned Frank Rivers to proceed to New York where the latter engaged a complete company of stars including W. F. Wallet, a famous English jester. The acrobatic team of King and Larue was also engaged together with a number of well-trained equestrians.

This newly organized company, heralded by the Eastern papers as having no superior in America, arrived in San Francisco on board the John L. Stephens on Saturday, March 1. Scheduled to open on the Thursday evening of the following week, they were forced to postpone their premiere performance until the 8th, due to the extensive preparations necessary. However, under the name of the Pioneer Circus, Rowe and Smith opened their San Francisco engagement on March 8, 1856 at the International Lot on Jackson Street, adjoining the hotel of the same name. This lot, on the edge of the theatrical district, was by tradition given over to horses. Years before, when horses were the only means of transportation, this lot had been used as a mustang corral. At the gate, one paid five dollars, entered, caught, saddled, and haltered one's mustang. For ten dollars, a vaquero would lasso the tenderfoot's horse for him. The premiere was attended by "one of the largest and most fashionable audiences that ever attended

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* Smith was connected with traveling circus companies since 1836, and later manager of some of the most celebrated troupes in the Atlantic states; among them, Spalding and Rogers, Stone and McCollums, S. P. Stickney's, and the St. Louis and Albany amphitheatres.

any place of amusement in the State...." wrote one of the San Francisco papers.

The company consisted of Ann Whittaker, the leading equestrienne of the troupe who had just arrived in San Francisco from New York and was still suffering from the effects of the long sea voyage, M'lle Tournair, W. F. Wallet, Burnett Runnells, Frank Whittaker, Franklin, King, Brewer, Larue, Thompson, Worrell, the strong man, Guilliot, and the two managers, Rowe and Smith.

BACK IN SAN FRANCISCO. 'BIGGER AND BETTER.'

The San Francisco Bulletin commented on the immense crowd that attended the first night and said:

> "....the audience was delighted with the good taste and excellent performances of the company. Many of the feats were entirely new, and some of them are truly astonishing. In addition to the accomplished style of performances, the troupe are all fine looking, and make a very agreeable impression upon the audience.
>
> "The clown (W. F. Wallet) is a fool of the Shakespearean school. He is the feature of the company....
>
> "We observed nothing that need shock the most fastidious and from the great success of the company on their opening night, we predict for them a very profitable season."

The Pioneer Circus Band appeared in a new wagon, especially constructed for the new company, drawn by eight horses. It was built and ornamented in Sacramento, and, says the San Francisco Bulletin:

> ".....is an elegant piece of workmanship, and reflects great credit on the mechanics of the 'City of the Plains.' It was built by John Hays, painted by Dewey and Simpson, all of that city.
>
> "The front board which curves gracefully over the backs of the wheel-horses is ornamented with a spirited representation of Sutter's Fort as it was in '48, with (Samuel) Brannan's store on one corner. The rear, which makes a similar curve in which the big drum is suspended, is decorated with the coat of arms of the State. On either side are several raised and gilded mystic symbols, under which, in fancy letters are the title words, 'Rowe's Pioneer Circus.'"

Rowe's position in the Pioneer Circus was the important one of equestrian manager and director. The general duties were to arrange the order of the various performances of the day and evening, to keep a watchful eye on the appearance and general conduct of every member of the troupe, especially that of the younger artists in his care.

In the ring itself his most popular scenes were the historical, pastoral, heroic, pantomimic and mythological in which he performed on two, three or four horses simultaneously. Among the most striking was his Emperor's Envoy, or the Russian Messenger, in which he portrayed a courier on his long,wearisome route with all its attendant perils of storms, robbers and assassins.

The advertising pamphlet published by the company described this pageant as follows;

> "The envoy becomes nearly frozen; despair with iron rule possesses his almost sinking heart; when, nerving himself,and animating his sinking

horses, he espies the steeple tops and minarets of gay St. Petersburg; and the brightness of inspiring hope renews the spring of his activity, he reaches home, embraces his only boy, presenting a fine and forcible picture of joy and gratitude.

"'Rise from the ground like feathered mercury,
And vaulting with such ease into his seat,
As if an angel dropped down from the clouds,
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus,
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.'

"His perfect and elegant balance, during the almost lightning speed of his horse, momentarily confirms the belief, so universal among the Grecians and Romans, of the Centaurs, or the embodying of horseman and horse. This idea is soon chased from the mind by his wonderful leaping, which for rapidity, height, distance and ease, far surpasses that of any equestrian either in Europe or America, alighting on his steed in an attitude so graceful that we could believe Canova had placed there one of his most admired statues.

"So perfect is he in his art, that feats which the most eminent performers dare not attempt riding forwards, he executes backwards with a courage, certainty and agility that startle even the most experienced of his profession. As he proceeds in his act the steed and rider seem inspired; rapidly increasing his daring feats he creates the most pleasing and intense excitement in the minds of the spectators, and as he gracefully leaves the arena, we are convinced that we have seen the greatest performer of this or any other country."

Not satisfied with all this, Rowe often led the heroic pageants and cavalcades that preceded the other acts and scenes. He also appeared in an equestrian exhibition called The Sorcerer of Siam, on his three horses, Hatred, Terror and Despair.

HARD TIMES. BEGINNING OF DECLINE

The circus closed on the 22nd of March, the proceeds

going jointly to benefit Rowe, his partner, John Smith, and the Manhattan Engine Company, Number 2. They leased the International Lot to Lee and Marshall, another circus company, and started on a tour of the Northern California mines. In June and July they headed south but times were hard now throughout the country, and although the circus was almost as much a necessity as a luxury to the pioneers, still there was too much fear of conditions for even the famous Rowe's Pioneer Circus to escape the general depression.

McCabe's Journal notes that the Pioneer Circus re-opened at the International Lot in San Francisco, on the first of July. It featured the reappearance of Master Rafael and the first appearance of Richard Willis, wizard bugler. On July 5, the circus held a benefit performance to purchase hose for the local Fire Department. This was the last night of their current engagement. W.F.Wallett, the Shakespearean jester left for the East.

Albert Dressler in his California's Pioneer Circus, however, has Rowe still touring the sourthern mines during this period. He states that

> "....the six months' trip (beginning in May) of the circus through the mountain countries in 1856 proved so disastrous financially that the proprietors were almost bankrupt by the time they got back to 'The City' in the fall."

The San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin, in an item dated September 24, 1856, mentions another proposed engagement of Rowe's company for this period:

> "Rowe and Company's circus is said to have effected an arrangement by which they will shortly open at the American Theatre in connection with dramatic and ballet performances...."

but there are no further notices to show whether this plan ever reached culmination. However, both McCabe and Dressler agree that Rowe opened the fall season on December 14, 1856, again at the International Lot. In spite of the generally bad financial conditions, the company was forced to keep their payroll up to the previous wage scale, thereby decreasing further the already low profits of the proprietors.

The month of October was filled with benefit performances beginning on the 18th with a free afternoon performance for the children of the local public schools and a benefit that night for the musicians of the company. The four nights beginning the 20th and running through the 23rd saw five different benefits; the first for Tom King; next for George W. Baker, the treasurer; third for Burnett Runnells; and two on the last day for John Smith, now an agent for the company, and R. Willis, the orchestra leader. On the 25th, a benefit was tendered Rowe and the following night was the last on the International Lot.

The next night, the 27th of October, they appeared at the Union Theatre, and on the 2nd of November, William Adams and his troupe of trained bears appeared. On the 6th of November, says McCabe's Journal, the full company with the exception of Rochette, a clown, left for the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands. However, Dressler contradicts this again,

for, he says, with no mention of the Island tour:

> "During the winter, with what members they could afford to carry some performances given at the newer and lower rate of 50 cents to a dollar were by no means undiscouraged. Rowe reorganized the circus for the new season, with the aid of some of his financial friends, and resumed his performances."

In March 1857, however, the Pioneer Circus opened at the corner of Montgomery and Post, but ran for but four days, closing on the 30th of March. Nevertheless, the few days of the circus were up to the old standard and pleased the people of the city.

The first of April found the troupe again on wheels for a tour of the mountain and mining districts. They exhibited first in Sacramento for five days at the corner of Fifth and M Streets. Their itinerary for the next several weeks ran as follows: Placerville, April 9;Georgetown, April 12 and 13; Michigan Bluffs, April 20; Nevada City, May 1; Orleans Flat, May 3; Marysville, May 13; Horsetown, June 4, where Rowe was forced to mortgage his show; Oroville, June 5 and 6; Marysville, June 15; and then back to Sacramento where the sheriff was forced to attach everything.

Not only were times hard during this period but Rowe's former success had drawn other circus performers out from the East and they offered more competition than Rowe could buck.

STRONG COMPETITION AND FAILURE

Besides Foley's there were dozens of other circuses, some of which were only fly-by-night outfits and others of

more substantial merit, none making it any easier for Rowe's business. There was a Tell's Olympic Circus in 1851, which offered some opposition but did not last. Hubbel, Brewer, Moore and Company took over the Olympic Circus and ran it for a few months but also discontinued in a short time. Lee and Marshall, however, featuring a good company well managed, was one of Rowe's stiffest competitors in the circus field.

There were other types of amusement that also cut into Rowe's gate receipts. The Evening Picayune, September 20, 1851, mentions one that would be illegal now. It reports that

> "A great bull and bear fight is to come off at the Mission tomorrow; we understand that the services of no less than five grizzlies have been engaged for the occasion."

Shelton's Museum on the corner of Kearny and Washington held an exhibition on November 3, 1851, of natives from New Zealand, Toomabooa and New California. Admission one dollar with ladies free. At the Russ Gardens, Mons. Guilliot, later to join Rowe's company, was appearing in his strong man stunt, twirling fifty and hundred pound dumbells over his head.

The Risley Circus came to San Francisco in 1855 featuring J. Langton, a clown, and the double rope ascension team of Signor and Signora Caroni, who, on October 20, walked a pair of ropes across Jackson Street to the top floor of the International Hotel. Bartholomew's Circus played for a week at the International Lot in August of 1856.

Lee and Marshall, during this period, were doing good business and in 1856, Marshall sold out his interest to H. M. Bennett, the circus then becoming known as the Lee and Bennett National Circus. For their 1857 season they featured William Worrell, the clown, his three daughters, Sophie, Irene and Jennie, the Melville Family, Jeannette Annarean, Edward Ducrow, Walter Le Roy and Hernandez, whom Rowe later engaged.

There was also a North American Circus in this year. In 1858, H. C. Lee was the sole proprietor of the National Circus and Hippodrome, playing at the International Lot. In 1859, the Pacific Museum ran an equestrian performance in combination with their menagerie. Victoria and Albert, the first performing elephants in San Francisco, made their debut to an interested audience at the International Lot in May and June of 1859.

Following this came the Metropole Circus, Tucker's Academy, Dan Rice's Circus, John Wilson's Hippodrome, the United States Circus, Magic Circus, Union Circus, Combination Circus and Joe Pentland's Great World Circus.

G. Chiarini, a great circus man and an experienced trouper from Europe, made occasional visits to San Francisco in his circuit of the three Americas--North, Central and South. He also played in Australia, Oceania, Borneo, Sumatra and Java. San Franciscans always received him with great enthusiasm.

John Wilson, one-time manager of Dan Rice's Circus

and later proprietor of Wilson's Hippodrome, was the first to bring a circus to San Francisco across the plains, partly by rail. His was a circus wagon without the zoo. Although he established himself in San Francisco, erecting his own wooden building at New Montgomery and Mission Streets, the completion of the Central Pacific Railroad brought other circuses to California and eventually drove him out of business.

In his palmiest days, his director was Omar Kingsley. Some ten years before that time, a brilliant equestrienne, Ella Zoraya, had dazzled circus spectators. She surpassed all the women riders of her day. Eventually it leaked out that Ella Zoraya was none other than Omar Kingsley, the female impersonator. At a benefit extended him in the seventies, he revived his old act.

Cole's Circus was the first troupe to come to San Francisco by rail with a complete circus and menagerie; this in 1873. Subsequently, all the great circuses of the country made visits to California -- Robinson's, Cole's, Sells Brothers', Barnum's, Bailey's, Forepaugh's, Ringling's, Coup's, Batcheller and Doris', and many others that are still making the rounds each summer under the names made famous then.

Rowe's circus in 1857 had been attached by the sheriff; there seemed to be no way out. His career as proprietor of a circus seemed doomed. Fortunately for Rowe, a business friend, John Center, purchased the circus at the

sheriff's sale and then offered to re-sell it to Rowe at a fair term. A letter addressed to Rowe and signed by John Center, dated November 13, 1857, reads:

> "Understanding that you are desirous of having the privilege before other parties of repurchasing the stock and paraphernalia of the 'Pioneer Circus' formerly your property.....I hereby offer you the first chance of purchasing the same at a price which will reimburse me for the monies which I am now laying out in said Circus, provided this offer should be accepted within ten days from this date."

Available sources do not reveal what sort of bargain was struck between the two, but subsequent events show that Rowe was again managing his circus on a tour of Hawaii and Australia. A letter to John Center, dated at Honolulu, February 7, 1858, and signed by J. A. Rowe stated that they had performed for seven nights in that city but had made no money as the whaling ships, usually anchored there, had left for the grounds before the arrival of the circus. He also wrote in this letter that the troupe was leaving in a day or two for New Zealand. Several of the horses were ill and trouble in the ranks was intimated.

> "Frank Whittaker and Hernandez has been drunk ever since they bin here and may desert the circus."

From Sydney, Australia, Rowe again wrote to his friend John Center, in San Francisco (June, 1858):

> ".....we leave tomorrow for Melbourne. We have don nothing here, barely paid our way....."

In the meantime (February 1, 1858), a letter from the County Clerk, Los Angeles, to Rowe stated that a Mr.

Bailey wished to purchase the Rancho Santa Anita for $20,000 cash. What Rowe did about this offer is not known.

ODD JOBS TO OBSCURITY

From his unprofitable trip to the South Seas and Australia, suffering such heavy losses that he had scarcely enough cash to buy his passage home, he returned to San Francisco in 1860. Nevertheless, he was still in great demand in the profession and many fine positions were offered him by showmen. From now on, he was never again the proprietor of a circus.

The Colonel and his wife made their first appearance since their return from Australia on July 26, 1860 at the opening night of the Metropolitan Circus. A benefit was tendered the couple on the 30th of the month. On the 5th of October, John Wilson of Dan Rice's Circus tendered Rowe another benefit, and he received one more on June 29, 1861 from the Union Circus.

He was busy in the circus ring as a performer until September 4, 1864 when he was offered the position of manager for Gilbert's Menagerie and Museum on Market Street, San Francisco. In the 1866 San Francisco Great Register his name appears as an engraver. At this time, he was kept busy cutting wood engraving for the large display ads used in the show business. But for him, it was more of a fascinating hobby and less of an occupation than breaking and training horses or performing in the circus, a career which always came first.

Wood engraving was part of the circus business when he was young, and he had learned it then along with everything else connected with the circus. Many of his own circus display ads were designed and engraved by him. He did most of his engraving work in San Francisco at the Charles A. Calhoun Print Shop (later bought out by the Francis-Valentine Company). All of Rowe's woodcuts were destroyed in a fire which gutted their building.

A New York paper, in a theatrical column called The Spirit of the Times, November 2, 1867 reports that

> "The Painter-Durand troupe of acrobats under the management of J. A. Rowe, are at Zacatecas. So marches civilization, Missionaries, whiskey, draw-poker, circuses, and National Banks, and then we become a metropolis."

What they meant by that is a moot question, but it shows that Rowe was still a victim of his wanderlust. Later, Rowe was employed by John Wilson, formerly of Dan Rice's Circus and now proprietor of his own company, as the Ring Master. He also became advance agent for Owen McDonald, a circus manager of the '70s. Rowe was exceedingly valuable in this capacity because of his exceptional knowledge of the territory and audiences.

Sometime in 1875, Rowe made his final appearance in the sawdust ring as a performer. He retired, spending the remaining years of his life as a horse trainer. Soon he became so obscure a figure that he no longer figured even in a minor capacity in side shows.

Rowe's whole lifetime had been devoted to bringing circus entertainment to the people of this world; and a major portion of his life had been concentrated in California. He had brought the circus here when the country was still new, when any business was a risky undertaking and he had engaged in a most hazardous enterprise -- one dependent only on the vagaries of gold-hungry miners. He had succeeded. But he had succeeded in far more than merely being accepted by the people. He had broken the ground for other circus performers; he had made this type of entertainment indispensable to the westerners. The horse was, after all, an every-day necessity of the Californians' lives, and riding a horse was nothing unique or novel; yet he, with daring stunts and well-trained horses, got the populace to pay $5 a seat to watch him ride.

Colonel Rowe's success blazed the way for other entertainers in this field. His daring and skill was applauded by all the boys throughout the world, boys regardless of age. Following in his footsteps came other equestrian artists, Buffalo Bill Cody, for one -- who brought the West to the crowned heads of Europe.

Even today, when the circus comes to town, galloping along at the head of the triumphal grand parade, must be the spirit of Colonel Rowe. And in the horse operas that come out of Hollywood, the western cowboy films that draw the most money and claim the greatest number of supporters, when

the thunderous roar of galloping hoofs comes out of the sound-track, leading the posse of daring riders on the silver screen is the ghost of Colonel Rowe.

However, his death in San Francisco on November 5, 1887 was practically unnoticed. The obituary in the Chronicle read briefly:

DEATHS

"Rowe, in this city, November 5. Joseph Rowe, a native of North Carolina, aged 67 years...."

JOSEPH A. ROWE

Dramatic performances given jointly with circus.

1850	1st REPRESENTATION
Feb. 4	Othello and Bachelor's Buttons
Feb. 7	Love in Humble Life and Dead Shot
Feb. 8	Soldier, Sailor, Tinker, Tailor
Feb.13	Idiot Witness
Feb.15	Seven Clerks and Race for a Wife
Feb.16	Irish Tutor
Feb.19	Golden Farmer
Feb.20	Happy Hours

1st APPEARANCE

Feb.21	Mrs. J. H. Kirby as Pauline in The Lady of Lyons
	J. B. Atwater
Feb.23	Nesbit McCron

1st REPRESENTATION

Feb.23	William Tell
Feb.27	Rent Day and Intrigue in The Bath Road
Mar. 1	Richard the Third
Mar. 4	Two Drovers or Fatal Prophecy
Mar. 6	Emigrant's Daughter or Fox and The Wolf

Benefit for:

Mar. 9	Mrs. J. H. Kirby
Mar.11	Master Rafael

1st REPRESENTATION

Warlock of the Glen

Closing night of dramatic performances

JOSEPH ANDREW ROWE

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(Quotations from Australian papers are from Albert Dressler's California's Pioneer Circus in which no source or date is given. This little book of research work edited by Mr. Dressler, has proved a most valuable source in preparation of the Rowe monograph.)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many persons and libraries have rendered valuable voluntary assistance to this project in the prosecution of the work on this volume and the ones that are to follow. At present thanks are due to Prof. Frank Fenton of San Francsico State College for historical advice; Mrs. Jessie L. Hooke of the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum for guidance in the use of the museum's fine theatre library; the Sutro Library and its librarian, Miss Helen M. Bruner, for the use of old newspapers and magazine files; the Reference Department of the San Francisco Public Library, and especially Miss Eleanor J. Sturges of that department; the Music Room of the Public Library and the untiring aid of Miss Jessica M. Fredricks its custodian; to Mr. John Greathead, artist, for technical help on color plates; to Mr. Douglass Fraser, artist and Bohemian Club member, for access to the club's material on the theatre; to Mr. Albert Dressler and Mr. Donn Huberty, already mentioned in these pages, and to others to whom credit will be given in the specific monographs to follow.

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